Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-TWO • NUMBER THREE • SEPTEMBER 1986

Sandinista Anti-Semitism and Its Apologists

Joshua Muravchik
Susan Alberts
Antony Korenstein

The Demotion of Man

Peter Shaw

A Case of Academic Freedom

Joseph Epstein

The Manchester Connection

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Will Gorbachev Reform the Soviet Union?

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Books in Review:

Myron Magnet
Eliot A. Cohen
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Terry Teachout
Samuel P. Huntington

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Letters from Readers

Family Matters

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "The Family, the Nation, and Senator Moynihan" [June], Glenn C. Loury cites two well-known experiments undertaken by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC)—Supported Work and Project Redirection—to support some of his points. As president of MDRC, I would like to express our quite different interpretations of the research results.

First, Mr. Loury suggests that the presence of children may have caused welfare mothers to work more and to benefit to a greater degree from Supported Work's treatment than the primarily male groups of ex-offenders and school dropouts studied in that demonstration. The evidence does not support this conclusion. We were fortunately able in this large experiment to examine the behavior of both an experimental and a control group within each hard-to-employ population. The experimental groups each participated in the program and their patterns over time showed the program's effects. In contrast, none of the control-group members received program services, and their experience represents the typical behavior of these populations in the absence of Supported Work.

It is clear from the control groups' work record that the men were far more active in the labor force than the women. On their own initiative, males sought out employment and worked more hours than the welfare mothers. However, participation in Supported Work completely changed this pattern. Welfare mothers in the experimental group worked many more hours than did the members of the ex-offender and school-dropout experimental groups. The program treatment itself must have caused this improvement—not the presence of a family—since both experimental and control groups had a similar number of children.

Second, in using the research from Project Redirection, Mr. Loury has focused on the operating experience of one program with a small sample to suggest that the receiving of welfare is a goal of many inner-city youths. Data for the full sample of 805 teen-age mothers in all four programs dispute this perception. The great majority of these teen-age mothers preferred work to welfare, and, in fact, "in most sites staff saw very little in the way of a 'welfare mentality' among participants."

I hope this explanation will clarify the findings from these important research projects.

BARBARA B. BLUM
Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Glenn C. Loury's forthright comments on the critical problem of chronic dependency in our society are painfully correct. Like similar instances of well-intentioned and misdirected charity in the past, the pauperization of young women and their children has become a moral tragedy that only morally motivated reform can remedy. We face, as Mr. Loury courageously points out, a breakdown of personal character and community values that in the 1970's turned many liberals into libertines, and replaced moral principles by amoral anarchy.

In the name of racial justice our avant garde engaged in a patronizing paternalism. . . .

The present revival of a sense of national purpose and pride offers hope for a renewal of virtue, character, and family integrity among demoralized elements of our society. To hasten this development, the Ethics and Public Policy Center is conducting a search for effective ways to escape from chronic dependence, with Mr. Loury as a member of our advisory committee. Suggestions from COMMENTARY readers are welcome. . . .

ERNEST W. LEFEVER
Ethics and Public Policy Center
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In connection with Glenn C. Loury's article, . . . I am reminded of the vilification of Senator Daniel P. Moynihan as a "racist" because of the policy paper he wrote dealing with the pathology of black family life, and his later memo to the White House—completely misunderstood, of course—about "benign neglect." These brought about his abrupt cancellation as the Commencement speaker at the

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University of Pennsylvania in the early 1970's. Penn fell into the disreputable lineup of many universities. . . . These "citadels of free speech and unfettered scholarship" kowtowed to propagandists, . . . and chose to heed instead of lead. Not one Penn faculty member raised his voice in defense of Senator Moynihan, completing the circle of cowardice. . . .

EUGENE W. FELDMAN
Lewistown, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his penetrating article, Glenn C. Loury unfortunately misinterprets E. Franklin Frazier's perceptive analysis of the familial roles of black men during and after slavery, which suggests that Mr. Loury should read carefully Frazier's *The Negro Family in the United States* . . . and his related works.

Contrary to popular belief, even among social scientists who should know better, Frazier argued forcefully that the subordination of women to men in many black families in the aftermath of slavery contributed to "the downfall of the matriarchate." Frazier, who believed that the roots of the black matriarchate (i.e., female-headed families) were only partially established in slavery, was keenly aware of the diversity of familial forms of blacks during and after slavery, including the form of black families characterized by patriarchal authority and female economic subordination.

Mr. Loury correctly assumes that Daniel P. Moynihan built upon Frazier's work, but he ignores the fact that Frazier (as well as such notable black social scientists as W.E.B. DuBois, Kelly Miller, and Oliver C. Cox) did not regard slavery as the cause of the decline of black familial stability in the United States in this century. Instead, Frazier dwelt heavily upon the possibly causal factors of growing migration, urbanization, and social-class stratification of blacks after emancipation. Long before Moynihan, Frazier, who never characterized the matriarchate as the dominant form of family among blacks following emancipation (in slavery, the familial head was most often a white master), called for the enactment and implementation of public policies to strengthen structurally weak black families. These policies included the elimination of racial segregation and better educational, employment, income, and housing opportunities. Frazier predicted long ago that increasing disorganization awaited urbanizing families evolving "within the isolated world of the Negro folk," unless a socially supportive environment were constructed around them to promote their organizational stability.

Mr. Loury's argument that the structural differences between black and white families which alarmed Moynihan occurred after World War II is also highly questionable. Aside from the fact that Moynihan certainly had or could have had access to the same census data available to Herbert Gutman and other interested investigators, Mr. Loury's data on the proportion of black and white families headed by females as late as 1940 are misleading. If one relies upon census data for the United States, as Mr. Loury does, in 1930 there was already a statistically significant higher proportion of female-headed families among blacks (19 percent) than among whites (12 percent). Obviously, this significant difference cannot be defined as a post-World War II phenomenon. Also, one should not, as Mr. Loury does, limit structural variables affecting familial stability to the marital status of a female head or the presence of intact families. Certainly through 1940, structural data about the population of black families are somewhat suspect, as are mortality data about poor men, and, for that matter, also black birth data, including the mother's marital status at the time of birth.

Mr. Loury rejects Frazier's explanation, but does not disprove it. . . . The multiple factors causing the comparatively high rates of black illegitimate births and female-headed families have undoubtedly increased or become more complex since Frazier's time, but Frazier's analysis cannot be dismissed as a fictional whim. . . . If Frazier's analysis was "almost certainly wrong," as Mr. Loury writes, how does he explain those phenomena before and after World War II? . . .

Mr. Loury properly identifies a major weakness of many public programs for the poor, including poor blacks. The federal government, despite its vast expenditures for research, rarely seeks to learn empirically which domestic welfare programs for the non-aged work and, if they work, why they do and for whom. I share Mr. Loury's emphasis on the need for valid and reliable research about the anticipated and unanticipated consequences of public programs for poor families, and believe with him that Charles Murray's hypotheses are quite plausible and much more in line with reality than are the alternative propositions promoted by the liberals. In fact, I can cite numerous case histories of older black teen-agers and young adults where Murray is shown to be right.

As I stressed in various public speeches and articles during the late 1960's and 70's, . . . "Uncle Sam," through his misplaced largesse, was an inept father for many poor black children, including those who resided with their mothers, but were sent to eat federally-funded breakfasts and lunches in summer parks, thereby raising the very serious question of the effects of "outside feeding" on parental control.

Missing from Mr. Loury's analysis . . . is the explicit awareness that many social concerns currently directed against black mothers of illegitimate children and black female heads of families are due, quite simply, to their economic inability to support themselves and their minor dependents. Mr. Loury, unlike Senator Moynihan, does recognize clearly, I think, that better employment opportunities for black males will probably not solve this problem.

What is needed, however, as a matter of public policy, are improved economic opportunities and results for black women who are already mothers of illegitimate children and familial heads, and who, if able-bodied, are forced to work for their economic well-being, as other people do to support themselves and their offspring. A concomitant requirement is the eventual elimination of welfare benefits for non-deserving recipients. Also, criminal action might be taken against males who impregnate females under 18 years of age and who do not fulfill their responsibilities for the economic consequences. In short, public funds should not be used to pay for the sexual follies of black or other persons.

Mr. Loury could have also questioned seriously the motivations of the black or black-led organizations which once denied or dis-

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missed the social seriousness of the relatively high rates of black illegitimate births and female-headed families and which are now rushing into the fray. These organizations, such as the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, may be seeking publicity and funding, but, in the final analysis, their motivations seem to me largely . . . self-serving. Owing partially to their lack of contact with or involvement in the lives . . . of black women who are (or are likely to become) mothers of illegitimate children or female heads of families, their likelihood of success in reducing substantially the rates of black illegitimate births and female-headed families is extremely negligible. The black professionals in these organizations rarely associate, especially not socially, with these types of black women, many of whom they treat with disdain. . . .

In any case, Mr. Loury's overall analysis is both penetrating and provocative, and he should be commended highly for challenging the rechristening of Senator Moynihan by blacks who previously rejected him without any intellectual discourse about his ideas and who are now accepting him—again without sufficient intellectual discourse about his ideas.

JACQUELYNE JOHNSON JACKSON
Durham, North Carolina

GLENN C. LOURY writes:

I am grateful to Barbara B. Blum for her comments regarding the interpretation of the work of the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. I can fully appreciate how very important it is for those involved with MDRC to safeguard the reputation of that institution by making sure that its research findings are not misused in public debates. I believe my use of these results is wholly consistent with that goal.

Two points are at issue: (1) Does the finding of greater success in the Supported Work experiment with welfare mothers than with ex-offenders or unemployed youths imply that the family responsibilities of these mothers were a spur to their labor-market success? (2) Do the comments of the "community women" in Harlem about the attitudes toward welfare of the young women with whom they were working suggest that public assistance may sometimes underwrite the development of dependency in the recipient population?

Concerning the first point, Miss Blum observes that it was participation in the experiment which produced the relatively greater labor-market involvement of poor women, since among the non-experimental group (used as controls) the more conventional pattern of greater male labor-force involvement was observed. Nothing I said in my article contradicted this interpretation, however. MDRC found that its effort to promote work was more successful among mothers than non-mothers. I suggested that this may be due to the pressure of family responsibilities which these mothers experience, but which most of the male participants do not. While I cannot prove this, it is not unreasonable, and not inconsistent with the fact that men work more hours per year than women in the poverty population as a whole. It is quite common in the study of male labor supply in general populations to find that married men work more hours per year than unmarried men, other things being equal. Perhaps for the people with whom Supported Work was involved, there is a positive "interaction effect" between family responsibilities and program participation. In any event, I was only concerned to point out that the link which many researchers have established between family structure and male employment does not establish the direction of causality—i.e., does not prove that it is the lack of jobs which has caused the deterioration of the family structure.

On the second point, I did not imply in my article, nor did I intend the reader to infer, the conclusion over which Miss Blum is so concerned—namely, that welfare recipients are not interested in work. Recall that I used the reports of staff working with teen-age mothers in Harlem to admonish Senator Moynihan for his conclusion that welfare does nothing to encourage self-destructive behavior among recipients. It is quite clear from the remarks I quoted that those working with teen-age mothers in Harlem are not nearly so sanguine about this question as is the Senator. Moreover, it was not the recipients' attitudes toward work on which I focused. Rather, I pointed to the apparent manipulation by boyfriends which the workers observed, and which caused them great concern. It should be possible for us to recognize these phenomena when debating public policy, without that recognition's lending credence to simple stereotypes such as those which Barbara B. Blum rightly hopes to avoid.

Needless to say, I am pleased by the supportive response to my writing offered in the letters of Ernest Lefever and Eugene W. Feldman. There is, I believe, an irreducible moral dimension to these problems which, if avoided, bodes ill for policy formation. At the same time, one wants to avoid labelling a class of citizens, be they young mothers, inner-city youths, or whatever, as "immoral." We have, as citizens participating in the formulation of public policy, to decide just what it is that we stand for, and to insist that the implementation of policy be consistent with those principles. The curtailment of open debate, a depressing example of which is offered by Mr. Feldman, is only possible with the cooperation, tacit or otherwise, of those who know better. Let us hope that a new era is dawning regarding our public discourse on the problems of poverty. If so, all of us, the poor included, will be the better for it.

Finally, let me express my sincere appreciation for the letter from Jacquelyne Johnson Jackson. Looking back at my article now, I must acknowledge that the rich and complex thought of the major sociologist, E. Franklin Frazier, was treated rather casually. In particular, while Frazier did, on my reading, place considerable emphasis on the legacy of slavery as a cause of the problems of the black family in his era, his analysis did not end there. As Mrs. Jackson suggests, and as contemporary sociologists such as William J. Wilson continue to affirm, the consequences for black family life of large-scale migration, and of racial discrimination and segregation after migration, should loom large in any credible account of what has happened to the black family.

Nonetheless, it does seem to me that the phenomenon over which so many people are so concerned today—namely, the advent of a large class of blacks whose social (including familial) circumstances seem to preclude their effective integration into the mainstream of American life—is of relatively recent origin. It is not that racial difference in family structure was unknown prior to World War II. It is that the nature and extent of the fam-

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ily-structure problem among poor blacks seem to have assumed their current, ominous form only in recent decades.

But whatever the minor differences that may remain between Mrs. Jackson and myself, these pale in comparison with our common perceptions about what now needs to be done. It is truly heartening to see more and more black intellectuals like Jacquelyne Johnson Jackson coming forward to say what only a few short years ago would have been regarded as unspeakable. Perhaps soon the politicians too will find the courage of their convictions!

Israel's West Bank Policy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I agree with Menahem Milson ["How Not to Occupy the West Bank," April] that nonintervention has been one of the principles of Israeli administration of day-to-day life on the West Bank, although I am not sure it has been "the guiding principle," as he claims. The main problem with his article lies not in his treatment of the theoretical underpinnings of the occupation but rather in the way he slides between the theory and the reality as if they were nearly the same. Mr. Milson can do so only by ignoring the degree to which the doctrine of nonintervention has been pushed aside in practice by competing considerations.

It is hardly surprising that a policy of nonintervention would face severe constraints, given the tension and security problems that exist on the West Bank. The causes of the latter are many, but among the ones that Mr. Milson ignores are Israeli actions that would seem to complicate a commitment to nonintervention, such as settling 52,000 Israelis (through 1985) amidst a hostile population, gaining ownership or control of a large portion of the land mass of the West Bank, and acting to limit economic competition with the Jewish state.

Among other examples, Mr. Milson dwells on Israeli policy toward the Jerusalem-based Palestinian press as an illustration of nonintervention at work. Sadly, the true lesson to be learned from this example is quite different. Once the half-truths that the author has strung together on this subject are corrected, one finds a case study of the way that nonintervention is sacrificed to other objectives.

Mr. Milson would have been correct to cite as evidence of nonintervention the fact that Israel permits the Palestinian press to be among the freest in the Middle East, despite its unabashed partisanship, hostility to Israeli policies, and support of organizations committed to acts of violence against the Jewish state. But the author is not interested in making such modest claims. Instead, he suggests that nonintervention is the predominant reality for the Palestinian press, and that authorities make their presence felt only in extreme circumstances.

Mr. Milson begins by claiming that press censorship "is restricted only to military and security matters." Although this has recently become the case for a small minority of Palestinian newspapers, most Palestinian media are required by law to submit for prior censorship their entire proposed contents, including editorials, social announcements, sports, and advertisements. While noncompliance is frequent and usually provokes nothing more than routine reprimands from the censor, it has also led to temporary closures and suspension of licenses to distribute. No written guidelines exist to explain what is taboo.

Mr. Milson follows with an assertion that is no less misleading. He says the tenor of the Arab papers is openly pro-PLO, and that Israel does not look into the sources of the papers' financial support. While it is true that the government has not made an issue of who funds the two dailies that are openly pro-PLO, it has padlocked less prominent publications it accused of being controlled by other organizations. As Col. Joel Singer, head of the International Law Branch of the Military Advocate General's office, told a delegation from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in 1984, when Israel finds out that a newspaper is owned or bought by a banned organization, the military authorities will ask for that paper's license to be withdrawn. Last October, the weekly *al-Darb* was shut permanently on the ground that it was controlled by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Several other Jerusalem-based publications have been deprived of most of their potential audience because they are banned from distribution in the occupied territories.

Mr. Milson's next sophism is revealing. "Only overt and direct incitement to violence is prohibited," he claims, but "sometimes editors get around this." How? By announcing upcoming strikes, he says. Let us pass over the fact that such news items are normally banned, as Chief Censor Col. Avi Gur-Ari told the Committee to Protect Journalists in March 1986—although they occasionally do reach print. The more disturbing issue here is what is revealed by Mr. Milson's illustration of editorial wiliness. That he considers reportage on an upcoming strike to be "overt and direct incitement to violence" suggests the way that this standard has been interpreted to include a range of material whose incitement to violence, if arguable, is anything but "overt and direct." In the name of maintaining security, Israel bans the Palestinian press from printing a large number of news items, phrases, photographs, and symbols. This includes many —but not all—factual reports of incidents and arrests on the West Bank, of comments by Europeans and others in support of Palestinian rights, and the statements and activities of PLO leaders abroad (and not only when they advocate resistance to Israel). Certain phrases, such as "Jewish gangs" and [Israeli] "colonialism" are ordinarily banned, as Col. Gur-Ari told the IFJ in 1984.

It would of course be foolish to ignore that words and images can excite, and that well-attended strikes pose a greater security risk than small ones. Certainly, the publication of an accurate story about an Israeli settler shooting a 12-year-old Arab boy does not make it easier to preserve the peace on the West Bank. Nor does, in the frequent judgment of the censor, publication of a denial by a Palestinian that he belongs to the village leagues, or of a wire-service report that the Austrian foreign minister has condemned "Israeli expansionism." My only point here is that the censors use their broad discretionary powers to prohibit far more news material than "overt and direct incitement[s] to violence." In doing so, they most definitely impinge upon the political culture of the Palestinians, which, according to Mr. Milson, "nonintervention was designed to leave untouched."

As I have tried to suggest by appraising the very mixed picture of

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Palestinian press freedom, there *is* a story to be told about the doctrine of nonintervention. The story is about a principle that regularly succumbs to other priorities. Instead of deriding nonintervention as the failed "path of least resistance" for Israeli policy-makers, Mr. Milson would do better to confront the realities of the occupation and ask how much that principle ever prevailed in practice.

ERIC GOLDSTEIN

New York City

MENAHEM MILSON writes:

My critique of the policy of the Israeli Military Government (IMG) in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip seems to have displeased Eric Goldstein exceedingly and made him very angry. In his letter he resorts to the notorious tactic of misrepresenting the arguments he wishes to attack. I shall therefore begin by restating the points in my article which he has misrepresented.

The introductory paragraph of my article makes it very clear that the article was devoted to examining one aspect of the many-faceted problem of the occupied territories, i.e., "the principles which have guided the IMG in administering the day-to-day life of the Arab population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. . . ." I especially focused on the principle which has been seen as the most distinctive feature of that policy and which has been termed by the policy's architects "nonintervention."

I emphasized that nonintervention *in the context* of the IMG policy "never did and still does not mean the absence of government involvement from *all* spheres of life." I explained that "nonintervention" in that context has a far more limited meaning. The architects of the IMG policy simply decided to refrain from any attempt to interfere with the political culture of the Palestinians, despite the fact that the most glaring aspect of that culture has so far been the expression of hatred for Israel.

In demonstrating how this principle of nonintervention has operated in reality, I shall once more cite some of the examples I offered in my article:

First, the Jordanian texts which are replete with hostility to Israel and the Jewish people are still the basis of the curricula of West Bank schools.

Second, PLO funding of pro-PLO activities and institutions has continued without interference. This reality is unequivocally confirmed by Yasir Arafat and Dr. Fu'ad Bisisu, Secretary of the Joint PLO-Jordan Committee, in statements which are quoted in my article but ignored by Mr. Goldstein. Beneficiaries of PLO funding include: all of the West Bank newspapers except for one weekly which was established four months ago with Jordanian funds; the pro-PLO research center in Jerusalem; a news agency and information service; a network of trade-unions which are centers of pro-PLO political mobilization and rarely deal with labor problems. (That "political mobilization" sometimes extends to actual terrorist actions was demonstrated a few months ago when the chairman of the construction-workers union in the West Bank village of Deek was blown up by a bomb he was preparing to plant in Israel.)

Third, four dailies and four weeklies (not just two dailies, as Mr. Goldstein says) sustained by PLO funds are published in Jerusalem under Israeli license. The example given by Mr. Goldstein of the closure of the DFLP-controlled *al-Darb* weekly last year proves

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only that Israeli bureaucrats, like all others, are not always consistent. When Mr. Goldstein asserts that "most Palestinian media are required by law to submit for prior censorship their entire proposed contents," he is guilty of the same failure to separate theory from reality of which he accuses me.

In fact, the Palestinian media rarely do submit their entire publications to the censors and the authorities normally take no measures against them for this failure. Despite the fact that Israeli law allows the authorities to use legal sanctions against those who publish pro-PLO material, the West Bank papers regularly and conspicuously include PLO slogans, speeches of PLO leaders, reports of the decisions of PLO bodies, eulogies of terrorists who are presented as martyrs. Anti-Israel terrorism (under its PLO code name of "armed struggle") is regularly extolled.

Mr. Goldstein does not deny my statement that "pro-PLO editorials are permitted," but takes exception to my assertion that anticipatory and predictive "reporting" in the form of a headline announcing an upcoming PLO-ordered strike is in fact "a call for a strike," and a way in which editors "sometimes get around" the prohibition against overt and direct incitement to violence. As for the nature of the strikes, anyone familiar with the situation in the West Bank knows that PLO-ordered strikes are quite violent affairs. The Israeli censor too is well aware of this. He is also aware that advance publicizing of a PLO-ordered strike is a means of getting around the prohibition of direct and overt incitement, and he therefore prohibits such "news" items. But, as Mr. Goldstein admits, "they occasionally do reach print," which is precisely what I said. Mr. Goldstein's claim that I have termed this type of circumvention a direct and overt incitement is yet another example of his tactic of distorting my words.

Although it is unquestionably true that the Palestinian press under Israeli rule enjoys more freedom from official intervention than the media in any Arab country, I must decline Mr. Goldstein's offer to describe this Palestinian press as "among the freest in the Middle East." I consider it grotesque to use the adjective "free" to describe papers funded and controlled by terrorist organizations. Despite Mr. Goldstein's angry protestations, it remains a fact that nonintervention (meaning specifically the allowance of all sorts of political, educational, and journalistic anti-Israel activity by Palestinians) has been the guiding principle of both the doctrine and the practice of the IMG.

The truth is that the consequences of this policy have been far less beneficial to Arab-Jewish relations and to the peace process than its proponents claimed they would be. Unfortunately, those who would have us believe that nonintervention is always the acme of wisdom and morality would prefer to ignore or obfuscate this truth. Ironically enough, they thereby join a motley coalition which includes those Israelis and Palestinians who for quite different reasons prefer the continuation of the status quo, harmful as it is, to an active policy aimed at changing it. But all of us who, like myself, hope for improved relations between Israelis and Palestinians and want to see the end of the occupation through a process of negotiation leading to a political settlement and peace must realize that a reexamination of the IMG's so-called nonintervention policy is long overdue.

Fun City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his review of my recent book on New York, *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis* [Books in Review, May], Jules Cohn asserts that I uncritically adopt the outlook of those who claim to be reformers, ignoring the problems with such "reforms" as Mayor Lindsay's plan to decentralize the city's school system. This misrepresents the argument of my book. One of its central themes, to the contrary, is that the views of self-styled reformers cannot be taken at face value. The phrases Mr. Cohn quotes to make his case are drawn from my description of the way various reformers regard themselves; they do not reflect my own understanding of them. In the case of Lindsay and his supporters, for example, I explicitly state that "the goals and values of the Lindsay administration should not be treated as givens" and go on to observe that their conception of the city "had such blind spots that one must ask how anyone could have found it plausible."

I argue that Mayor Lindsay and his allies developed their distorted view of the city—one which ignored the interests of the city's Jewish and Catholic middle class—because it justified their efforts to seize control of the agencies and resources of municipal government. I note, for example, that they claimed school decentralization would improve the education of poor black children, but cite David K. Cohen's devastating contemporary critique in COMMENTARY ["The Price of Community Control," July 1969] of the arguments for community control. I go on to observe that "Members of the Lindsay coalition doubtless found the case for decentralization persuasive—despite clear lacunae in the arguments made on its behalf and glaring weaknesses in the evidence cited to support these arguments—because it would transfer control of the schools into their own hands."

Mr. Cohn also misrepresents what I say about the "advocacy professionals" of the 1960's and the "policy analysts" of the 1980's, as well as what I say about Mayor Koch. This will be evident to any reader of *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis* who recognizes that describing the views of political figures implies neither agreement nor disagreement with them.

MARTIN SHEFTER
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

JULES COHN writes:

Martin Shefter asserts that he takes issue in his book with the reformers' views, but in fact he takes them more at face value than he claims in his letter.

Of course he mentions a few of John Lindsay's many malefactions. But he treats them as mere tactical miscalculations, furthermore insisting, and thereby practicing apologetics rather than analysis, that "there is no reason to doubt the sincerity" of the Fun City mayor's "commitment to the causes he crusaded for." In his categorical approach to the complexities of New York politics, "business interests" are pitted against the "ardor" of "expenditure-demanding" forces driven by the "democratic impulse."

The same sympathy is evident in his account of the policy analysts, a small band of quantifiers who annually come forward with elixirs for the city's ills, an account which leans toward advocacy and

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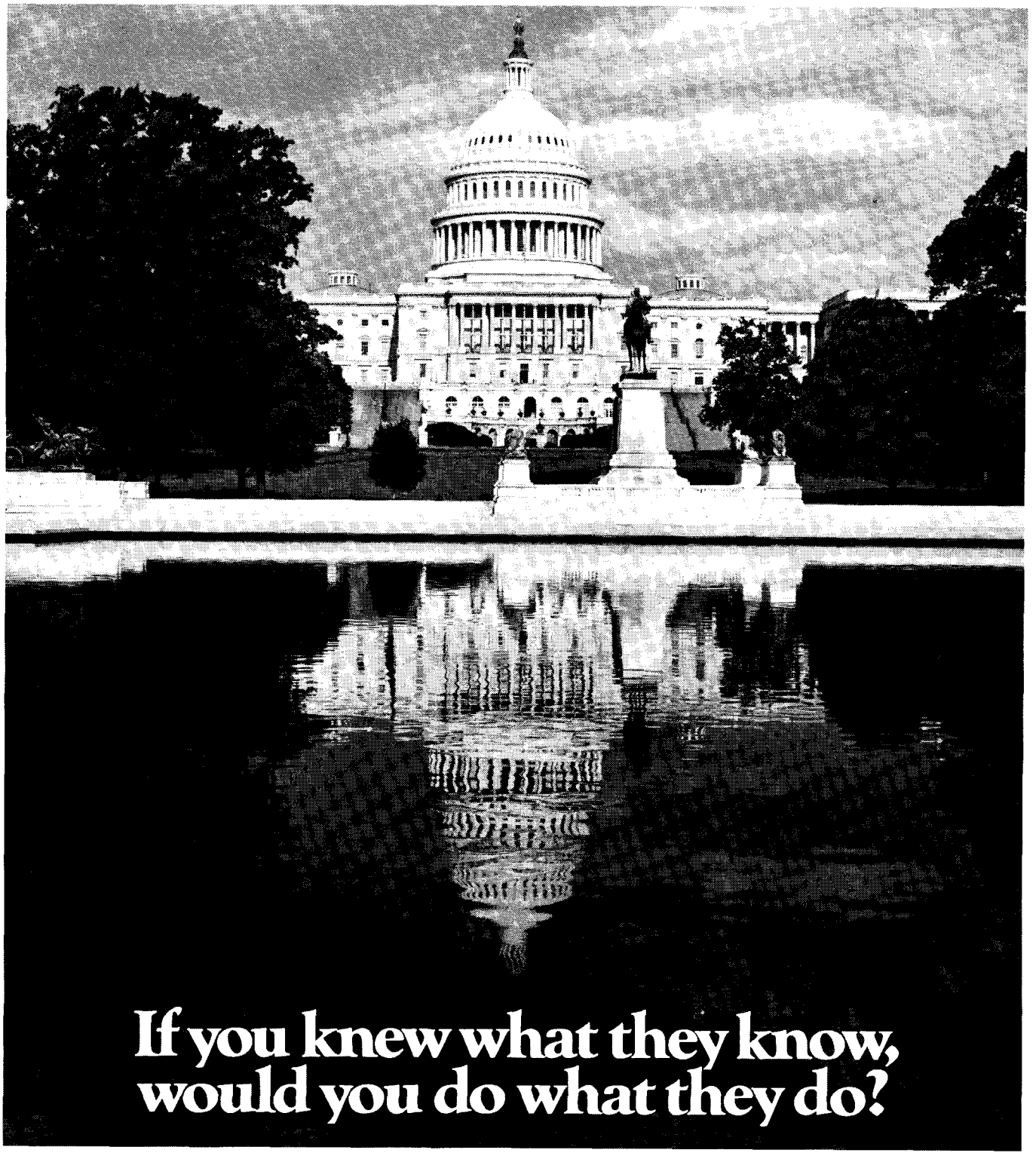

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ends in circumlocution. Instead of treating them simply as a lobbying group, as he does "business interests," and assessing them plainly, he anoints ("vanguards of reform"), flatters (their wares are "most impressive"), and prophesies a noble future for them (they could "provide the intellectual leadership" of a "neoreformist movement"). Then he adds: "By their own lights, they seek to use their skills to help the municipal government function. . . ."

Even some of Mr. Shefter's sensible observations, such as those about Mayor Koch, are oblique, to say the least ("there is a high degree of fluidity associated with the politics of personalism"), or accompanied by innuendo, as when he invokes "indirect evidence suggesting" that the mayor is tied to real-estate interests without ever spelling out the charge.

But the periphrasis reaches its peak when he reports without critical comment that the controversial activities of that salaried caboodle of social activists, here known as the advocacy professionals, were in effect to be "carefully evaluated" by some of the advocates themselves at the very "intellectual center" (Columbia's School of Social Work) where their doctrines of agitation were hatched.

The doubletalk bubbles up only now and then throughout the book, but despite Mr. Shefter's objection, readers (especially students) without a sure-footed guide or first-hand knowledge of the terrain being described will not be able to recognize how the material is being rendered, notwithstanding that laudatory citation from COMMENTARY, along with others from the *New Yorker*, the *Village Voice*, and the Board of Directors of the Municipal Assistance Corporation.

The Question of Belief

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard John Neuhaus, in his review of James Turner's *Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America* [Books in Review, April], treats atheism and atheists quite unseriously. Perhaps nothing else is possible from his own theistic framework, although I doubt this, since as an atheist I do not find myself tempted to repay the insult. The evidence is clear in his choice of alternatives between traditional belief and what he refers to as the "subjective lights [we] might 'find meaningful,' " as well as in his choice of Madalyn Murray O'Hair as the representative of unbelievers in contemporary America.

Actually, however it came about —and I am not sure any simply causal explanation will suffice here —unbelief is a philosophical fact of considerable significance, based on the often personally disturbing failure to find sense in the belief system with which one grew up. As a former Central European, with a Roman Catholic upbringing that was by no means casual, I can testify to my own very serious search for a basis for belief. My priest responded to this search by noting that "God puts us all through a time of doubt," which was hardly helpful to one who wanted desperately to make sense of what this sort of talk is based on. . . .

Without trivializing the matter by trying to treat it in a mere letter, I wish just to express how utterly beside the point the kind of analysis Mr. Neuhaus offers manages to be to one who has always found the issue very serious and has tried to choose honestly, given the tools at his disposal. Perhaps a realization of that could lead someone like him better to understand the origins of unbelief anywhere, not just in America.

TIBOR R. MACHAN
Auburn, Alabama

A Neglected Novelist

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I always enjoy Joseph Epstein's sensitive writings about authors and books, and none more so than his perceptive appreciation of E.B. White ["E.B. White, Dark & Lite," April]. But I feel obligated to correct one . . . misstatement.

So far as I know, the Pulitzer Prize awarded White for "the body of his work" was not unique, as Mr. Epstein claimed. In 1957, the Pulitzer Prize committee made a similar award to that vastly underrated American author, Kenneth Roberts, for "the historical novels which have long contributed to the creation of greater interest in American history."

This was no doubt to make amends for 1940, when Roberts's *Oliver Wiswell*, which told the story of the American Revolution from the Tory point of view, was denied a Pulitzer. Though the novel was generally regarded as the best of that year, the Pulitzer people decided to give no fiction award at all rather than honor a book so repugnant in its philosophy.

Roberts's other novels, all set in and around the Revolutionary War, include such prominent titles as *Northwest Passage*, *Arundel*, *Rabble in Arms*, and *Lydia Bailey*. Perhaps it is time for a reappraisal of his work.

MARION SIMON GARMEL
Indianapolis, Indiana

Why Hart Lost

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am . . . grateful to COMMENTARY and to Gregory A. Fossedal for taking note of my book, *The Outside Story* [Books in Review, June]. Could I expand on my analysis of one of the 1984 campaign's most important events—the fall of Gary Hart?

"Brookhiser," Mr. Fossedal notes, "attempts an explanation, but it does not amount to much. He cites Hart's blunders—especially over the matter of his own name and age. But this is not persuasive." Indeed not. That's why I asked whether Hart's booboos were "the deciding factor, the slip of the lip that sank the new generation of leadership? Yes, proximately; which is to say, no, not at all. If a politician's defeat depends on such a minor factor, then he was as good as beaten long before. No kingdom is lost for the want of a single nail. Hart had correctly picked out Mondale's weakness—special interests. But they were also a strength."

How is that? "From time to time throughout the campaign, Mondale's rivals would depict" the endorsement of him by special-interest groups (such as NOW, the NEA, and the AFL-CIO) "as venal transactions. . . . They got it backward. Mondale was able to go to these groups, . . . because he had been with them all along, fighting their fights. . . . Liberalism had endorsed the efforts of Mondale's groups, and they endorsed liberalism in the person of Mondale."

The story of Gary Hart's weakness was thus in fact the story of Walter Mondale's strength, at least among regular Democratic voters. Unfortunately for them, their taste for Mondale's brand of old politics is shared by fewer and fewer Americans. This will continue to be a problem for Gary Hart, and for the Democratic party, in 1988, and beyond.

I look forward to meeting Mr.

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Fossedal on the campaign trail as we try to figure it out.

RICHARD BROOKHISER
New York City

GREGORY A. FOSSEDAL writes:

As my review noted, Richard Brookhiser discussed several possible explanations for Gary Hart's rise and fall, not just Hart's occasional gaffes. The problem is that none of them was particularly convincing or well documented, including the paragraphs above.

If Mondale's linkage to special interests was the key variable, why did Hart in particular benefit from it? Why did he exploit it to near-victory—Mondale, according to some reports, had actually written a withdrawal speech after the Maine caucuses—and then, suddenly, collapse? I read Mr. Brookhiser's book with the keen anticipation of learning what changed in Hart's speeches, commercials, and other communications with the electorate—the "outside story"—that caused his decline. Richard Brookhiser disappointed me on that particular score; even William F. Buckley's praise for this book, like mine, is qualified by an observation that it contains little fresh reporting.

But it's always tricky criticizing a book for what it doesn't do. What Mr. Brookhiser *does*, as my review said, is to recapitulate the 1984 campaign with wit and style. I probably won't see Mr. Brookhiser on the 1988 trail, as I'm much too lazy to cover a campaign; but I hope he'll write a book on the '88 race, in which case I'll feel well-informed without having to eat all that rubber chicken.

East-West Art

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I wish to protest against the tenor, and in particular the conclusion, of James Gardner's "Indian Art—and Ours" [April]. Matters Indian do, it is true, tend to engender intense responses, and those of us who deal with Indian culture professionally eventually become used to confronting the two equally useless extremes of uncritical adulation (often of an apologetic cast), on the one hand, and a rather vicious criticism, on the other, though there is none of the latter in Mr. Gardner's article. Instead, one encounters a rather different, perhaps even more insidious, kind of blindness.

Mr. Gardner visited the recent

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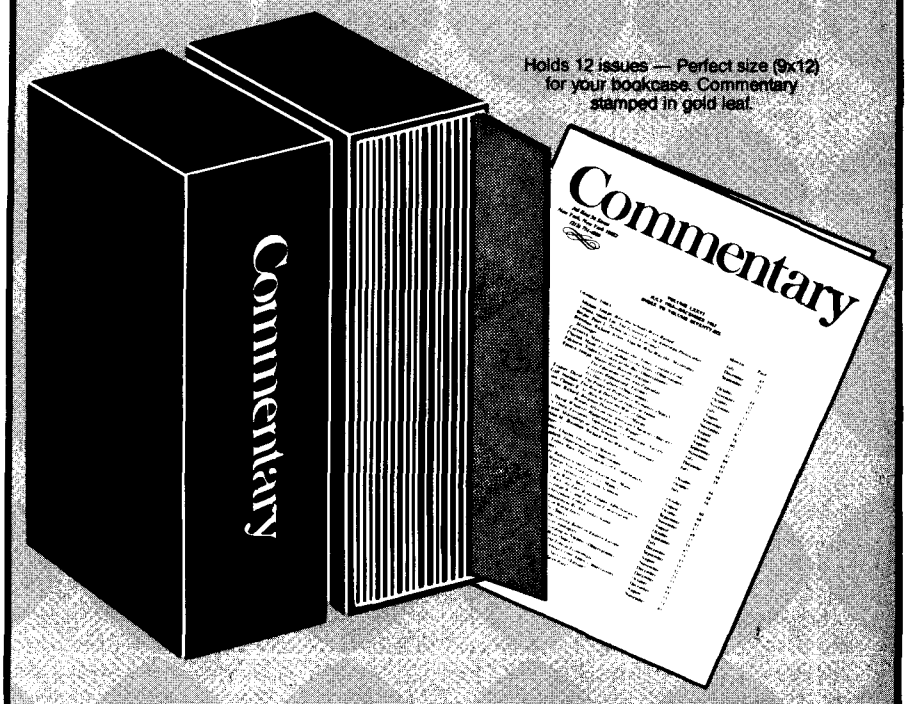

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exhibitions at the National Gallery in Washington and the Metropolitan and apparently found much of interest. . . . Something, however, seems to have gone wrong. The article that begins on a note of appreciation . . . ends with the author's headlong flight back to safety within the confines of his Western artistic heritage. One can sense his relief quite palpably, for example, in his comparisons between Rajput and Mughal paintings and the Limbourg illuminations, to the disadvantage of the former, and so on. All this then serves to lead up to the climax, in which Mr. Gardner declares, on the basis of Western achievements in art, his belief that Western civilization is, "taken as a whole, the greatest in human history."

But what are we to make of the masterpieces that were assembled in the two exhibitions? Are they simply episodic manifestations of genius in a culture which, "taken as a whole," simply does not quite make the grade? I think, for example, of the striking Bhairava panel in the Washington exhibit; of the Chola Sivas; of the Pahari miniatures at the Met. To me, these works, embodying the most amazing expressivity, subtlety, and grace, are important achievements of the human spirit by any conceivable standard. And what of the ideas that they were meant to convey, and the rich inner world from which they emerged—a world which is, no doubt, very different from our own, but surely no less compelling, complex, and in need of exploration and understanding?

I would not wish to be misunderstood. I do not believe that Indian civilization is superior to (or for that matter inferior to) any other human civilization. How indeed could anyone seriously make such a judgment? By comparing average per-capita incomes in the year 1000 with those of today? By adding up the number of people killed in futile wars, or victimized by their own fanatical and erring governments (on the latter score, I fear the modern West would do rather poorly compared with India)? The remarkable self-assurance of a Macaulay vis-à-vis the exotic culture that he made no serious attempt to understand is surely somewhat out of date. Of course Mr. Gardner is entitled to his own taste, and I can easily understand and accept that he prefers the Old Masters to the Rajputs. But it is one thing to state such a personal response in its own terms, or as a part of the cultural context which, one supposes, conditioned it and gives it meaning, and quite another to deduce from this that an entire civilization is not up to "our" supposedly higher standards. There is simply no excuse for such snobbery and smugness, especially when it is rooted, as it nearly always is, in ignorance. . . .

DAVID SHULMAN
Institute of Asian and African Studies
Hebrew University
Jerusalem, Israel

JAMES GARDNER writes:

David Shulman seems to have misunderstood entirely the tenor of my article. Although he has some intuition about my conclusion, it occurs to me that I may be guilty of having misled him through the injudicious choice of a single word. When I used the word "civilization," I thought the context would make it clear that I was speaking of art only. In no way did I intend to comprise within it religious or social questions which are not susceptible of the same criteria of judgment that I consider preeminent in any informed assessment of a work of art. Since I meant to discuss only the art of India and not its social or religious determinations, I consider Mr. Shulman's points about religious and military matters irrelevant to my article.

What I find so problematical about Mr. Shulman's letter is that he seems scarcely to have read anything between the first and last paragraphs of what I wrote. I would like to affirm that there are few artistic experiences I have cherished as much as I have those of Indian art, and it was my intention, and I hope my achievement, to manifest this affection throughout my article. I wonder how I can be accused of "blindness" toward Indian art when I clearly like it as much as I say I do, and I hope Mr. Shulman will accept that I was telling the truth and meant what I said.

But it would never have occurred to me that liking or indeed loving a work of art precludes preferring something else. Mr. Shulman appears incapable of appreciating the modality of my argument. If I say that, *grosso modo*, European art is better than Indian, I may be understood to be saying that I consider Indian art worse than European, or European even better than Indian. The latter was clearly my intention, for, as my article demonstrates, I love the one greatly, and the other more.

Mr. Shulman's attempt to make me sound as though I consider Western art the standard by which all other art should be judged will find no basis in anything I ever wrote or thought. Rather than seeking to assimilate all things to Western culture, I am convinced that comparisons can and must be made precisely because there are universals of excellence embodied as much in Indian art as in Gothic or Renaissance, but which are not to be identified as the unique property of any one of them. I feel no compunctions about saying a Nigerian bronze head is as good as, if not better than, a Brancusi, not because I am eager to extol or denigrate Rumania or Nigeria, but because both artifacts strive ultimately for the same elusive thing.

To insist upon the autonomous excellence of every culture or every work of art is to incarcerate each in the adventitious specifics of its own creation, indeed to be blinded to its universal significance, which is the only thing that enables us to understand the art of other cultures. Mr. Shulman's refusal to compare cultures, and his insistence on the equality of all cultures, though intended as high-minded liberalism, is really a direct assault on the universal communicability of artistic ideas. If we insist on the absolute and irreducible relevance of any culture, must we not then abstain from considering Albanian art, say, a little less prepossessing than the art of India or France? Upon what grounds does the Hebrew University (and everyone else) have departments of Indian and French art, but not Albanian art? Can Mr. Shulman prove that Indian art is better than Albanian?

All in all, his refusal to make cross-cultural comparisons is a strange argument for any kind of enthusiastic response to works of art. Any such response, if it is informed by a modicum of judgment, will proceed from the perception that the object in question is significantly better than other things in its vicinity. Unless one refuses categorically to make judgments, unless one insists that there is nothing shared by all the art of the world, unless one insists that each specific work is fully autonomous, it will follow that qualitative dif-

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ferences must emerge. We may abstain from judgment or be unable to render it, but that does not mean the differences will go away.

It is in this sense that I feel we can state that the artistic achievement of Europe, taken as a whole, and by universal terms of comparison, must be judged the greatest in human history.

Religious America

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Religion in Post-Protestant America" [May], Peter L. Berger has provided a stimulating discussion of the constitutional setting of church-state relations and an intriguing proposal for the churches' role in "post-Protestant" America, but his analysis of the larger issue of religion and politics is based on a flawed concept.

The notion of the "naked public square," popularized by Richard John Neuhaus, is not without serious problems, yet Mr. Berger accepts this concept as fact and bases his proposal upon it. At bottom, the Neuhaus-Berger concept employs a physical metaphor and preys on the imagery of science. Society is assumed to be a space, occupied by legitimating symbols. Should one set of symbols be removed from the space, another rushes in to take its place. Society —like nature—abhors a vacuum. This process has all of the inexorability of natural law, indicated by Mr. Berger's use of words such as "inevitably."

But there is a double dose of strict necessity involved here. In the mature (Neuhaus) version of the concept, the first set of legitimating symbols is *religious*. The new set, which rushes in to fill the vacuum, is—dialectically—anti-religious. More precisely, it is anti-religious in a new, pernicious, pseudo-religious way. Apparently, human beings are inherently religious beings who cannot escape their religiosity. Their new social-symbolic "sacred canopy" is no less religious than their old one, only now it is ersatz, if not demonic. For Neuhaus, the alternative to a bona-fide religious public square is a totalitarian one. In Mr. Berger's version, a "secular humanist" square occupies the social space. In both, more than a little old-fashioned philosophical determinism is implied. I submit that these two levels of necessity—one ontological, relating to the nature of society, the other historical, relating to the course of historical change—amount not to a sociological analysis but to a metaphysical one, where "metaphysics" is used in the medieval sense as a discipline that relies upon and picks up where physics proper leaves off. The "naked public square" rests on the intuitive appeal of *horror vacui*, but does not yet rise to the level of theory.

The metaphysical model requires the data to lie on a Procrustean bed of dialectics. If the first set of legitimating symbols is truly religious (thesis), then the cultural products of the "New Class" are falsely religious (antithesis). The fundamentalist Right enjoys the synthetic role of a historical *deus*

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ex machina, reaffirming the intrinsic, high religiosity of the American people in the public square. In this view, the fundamentalists merit, if not our acclaim, at least our approval, for they are getting the historical pendulum to tick back on track again. They are correcting an imbalance. Presumably, the *Zeitgeist* smiles on them.

But what of those whose acquiescence in the face of historical inevitability is still perturbed by traces of alarm? If the dialectic is abandoned, then it may well be that the new political-religious activism is not the antithesis of a pseudo-religious secular humanism, but merely an extreme, even warped, development of American religiosity itself. Indeed, the religious commitment of the American people never withered away. That religiosity, among other things, has been characterized by latitudinarianism, theological pragmatism, and a propensity toward a common set of moral virtues. The new fundamentalists reject this middle-of-the-road American piety and, by so doing, jeopardize the pluralism and civility it encouraged. And that is at least as disturbing as an alleged symbolic vacuum in our public squares.

[Rabbi] Alan Mittleman
American Jewish Committee
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

For several years now I have been telling my students that Peter L. Berger, besides being our best sociologist of religion, is always provocative. His "Religion in Post-Protestant America" verifies once more the accuracy of my generalization. . . .

It is more than a quarter of a century now since Mr. Berger's *Noise of Solemn Assemblies* and Will Herberg's still classic *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* tried to jar the mainline Protestant denominations . . . out of their easy alliance with the cultural status quo of an upwardly mobile American middle class. Peter Berger's critique is less temperate than Will Herberg's, but both authors are essentially preachers of jeremiads: religion may build comfortable bridges with culture, but unless it does so with extraordinary caution, it may also sell its birthright for a miserable mess of unseasoned pottage. . . .

It is an impressive argument, more impressive religiously than sociologically, however. In Mr. Berger's case, it is obvious that he had been influenced by Karl Barth, whose entire enterprise constituted a monumental and magnificent attempt (certainly, I think, the most brilliant theological achievement of our century) to free religious proclamation from bondage to cultural mediation and thus also to allow theology to reflect solely on a message that breaks in as unexpected news from the outside. The people who hear and affirm this surprising news about themselves become, in Barth's program, the religious community which, as God's partisan band, owes allegiance to no cultural status quo or to any social program *save* obedience to God's mandate. Barth's view of authentic religion then was by necessity that of a sect.

The rigorous Barthian theology was wonderfully suited to a situation such as that created by the rise of Hitler's National Socialism and its attempt to manipulate the church by affirming it while also forcing it to become heretical at the most basic level. It is from a tradition like Barth's that we must look if we expect to find prophets and martyrs. (Not surprisingly, Dietrich Bonhoeffer came from the Barthian camp.) On the other hand, the position articulated by Barth lacked satisfactory resources for dealing constructively with the ambiguities of the American civil religion and its relationships with the American class structure. It is not surprising that Mr. Berger later repudiated both the theological method and the sociological conclusions to be drawn from Barth's "crisis" theology. . . .

Back in the 1960's, both Mr. Berger and Will Herberg were enormously popular on just those more or less liberal seminary campuses that recruited the bright, articulate types who would become the future religious academicians, staffers of church offices, and writers of social statements. What those Berger readers learned was not so much to distrust every class identification and its ideology as to loathe and despise popular middle-class religiosity. Mr. Berger was never a New Class elitist. By the late 1960's many of his readers had become that, however. Thus the middle class in general, and not just its religiosity, had become the enemy. Ironically, just as the members of the emerging New Class cut themselves off from the really "real world" of their constituencies, they shut themselves up in a sectarian movement that, most ironically of all, was rapidly moving toward a leftist secularism, pathologically hostile to American institutions.

The mainline denominations, most of whose members remain thoroughgoing, if not necessarily mischievous, middle-class Americans, are left with a leadership vacuum. The situation becomes pulpit *against* pew and insofar as the "enlightened" pulpit has become ideological (i.e., "sect type"), there is little chance for its reform. . . .

Since denominational constituencies remain "furiously religious," if there is to be any leadership, it must come from outside traditional channels. Thus the new evangelicals fill the void. For all that one may deplore the excesses of the Moral Majority, its rise was made possible only by the delinquencies of those who gave up on the task that was more appropriately theirs. If one is tempted to think I exaggerate the situation, I only advise him to read through half-a-dozen issues of *Christianity and Crisis*, a distinctly New Class journal.

It is easy to damn the crowd as the reactionary enemy. It is hard, but both a noble and rewarding vocation, to identify with one's constituency while also striving to mediate a better future. No one at work on the present scene lays out the desired agenda better than does Peter Berger.

Leigh D. Jordahl
Luther College
Decorah, Iowa

To the Editor of Commentary:

Peter L. Berger's "Religion in Post-Protestant America" is interesting, provocative—and too one-sided. His focus is the tension between the "establishment" and "free-exercise" clauses of the First Amendment, and the fierce contemporary debate between separationists who oppose establishment, and accommodationists who believe their opponents deny the right to free exercise. Mr. Berger concludes that the churches should "draw back from . . . partisan advocacy . . . and return to . . . mediation."

That this advice is problematic can be illustrated through a consideration of his notion of "Protestant," which needs clarification. The theologian Paul Tillich is helpful here. He distinguishes between a Protestant "era," which is

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transient, and a "principle," which is "eternal." . . . But beyond era (and ethos), Tillich sees in the Protestant principle a universal significance exemplified in prophetic figures extending from Amos through Jesus to, no doubt, his colleague, Reinhold Niebuhr. The essence of the Protestant principle is immediate (non-symbolic) access to God, the eternal order of things. . . . The Protestant principle requires that those who understand it affirm it and work, often by radical criticism, for the betterment of an imperfect world in the light of it.

Its principle, its essence, is the aspect of Protestantism that Mr. Berger neglects almost completely. He concentrates instead upon Protestantism as a public, collective phenomenon and on its political, legal, and social features. Allied with this is his use of functional theory in assessing the meaning and value of religion. Accordingly, the tension between the two First Amendment clauses shows that the essential function of religion must be to supply symbols to legitimate . . . a temporal social order. . . .

Functional (and class) analysis of collective religious phenomena provide the basis for Mr. Berger's contention that contemporary First Amendment conflicts are exacerbated by the fact that the "Protestant establishment" no longer exists. But, ironically, Mr. Berger does not seem so sure of himself on this fundamental point. He says that the phrase "may at first sound grating" (actually, it is an oxymoron, more on which later). . . .

To Mr. Berger's diffident remarks I would point out that there never has been an American Protestant *establishment*. On the other hand, to say that America was and still is "a nation with the soul of a church" is true. . . . The most striking religious fact about America is that it is both a *secular* nation and one with "a deep-rooted sense of historical mission" and, from its beginnings to the present, individually and collectively, a panoply of what William James calls "the varieties of religious experience." Mr. Berger rightly points to the "vivid picture of the bewildering variety of the colonies in the matter of religious arrangements." (Yes, and more variety *than in* just "arrangements.") He adds, again rightly, that religious Americans have been mainly united in what they were against. And what did early Protestants like the deist Anglican James Madison and the dissident Baptist Roger Williams have in common? And what do the ACLU and born-again evangelicals today have in common with one another and with Madison and Williams? In a phrase, opposition to what William James calls the "spirit of corporate dominion" in religion. *Voila l'ennemi!*

American Protestants I have known are basically individualists in their religiousness, regardless of the church, sect, cult, or other group to which they may (or may not) belong. Mr. Berger has a point in criticizing the American penchant for transforming political campaigns into moral and religious crusades—but not for the right reason. The reason is that such activity debases religion by misrepresenting it and obscuring its unique essence.

The true locus of the religious spirit of the American Protestant is in the soul of the individual. That Mr. Berger is apparently unaware of this fact is revealed in his reference to "any secularization scale, be it subjective (recording what people say they believe) or objective (recording what people actually do in terms of religious practice)." For Mr. Berger, it is clear, the "subjective" is a social-science, not a religious, concept. . . .

Let us look at William James's concept of religious subjectivity and its implications for the public world of American religion. . . . For James, the religious experience of the individual is the best thing about the human species. The "root and center" of subjective religious experiences are "mystical states of consciousness". . . . [which] James values above all others . . . because they foster qualities of "saintliness," the essence of which is the propensity to produce and increase "goodness," benefiting everyone. . . .

If James is right, the most creative function of contemporary churches would not be mediation, as Mr. Berger advises, although that is a most valuable one, certainly superior to the strident advocacy of partisan political positions. The most creative function of the church would be what it has always been—to produce mystics and saints, who, in turn, serve the common good. Such would be true even of those "so-called 'mainline' Protestant denominations . . ." which Mr. Berger dismisses too facilely and contemptuously. For even in their current misguided subscription to essentially political theologies (read: mythologies) of "liberation," there is a growing counter-movement of "spirituality," comprising much of what James means by the mystical, the saintly, and the pragmatic.

As a lifelong practicing American Protestant and an academic teacher and scholar of religion, I take delight in Mr. Berger's notion of the "Protestant smile," now said to be widely and indiscriminately diffused throughout American society and to have two basic forms, "heartwarming" and "hypocritical." Surely this is the cream of the jest. Surely there must be as many different Protestant smiles as there are Protestants and the infinitely various occasions which evoke them. Downright compelling, for example, is the smile of amusement brought forth by Mr. Berger's statement that "when it comes to religion, America is an India with a little Sweden superimposed." I shall always treasure this image as a kind of koan as I ponder other parallels to "India" and "Sweden" in religious America. . . .

Again, if one takes seriously the Hebrew-prophetic provenance of the Protestant principle, with its iconoclastic and anti-mythic worship of the eternal, one smiles at such key Berger terms as "Protestant establishment" and "symbolic knowledge" as oxymoronic. For a serious Protestant, nothing is really *established* except the eternal order. . . .

But we have reached the point where we must stop smiling our Protestant smiles—even a weary one at worn-out Marxist class analysis—and get back to serious business. . . . The contemporary incarnation of "the spirit of corporate dominion" is the totalitarian state, particularly in its Soviet-style Marxist-Leninist form.

The generic spirit of corporate dominion can, of course, be found everywhere, not least in America itself. Pitirim Sorokin pointed out long ago that the Soviet Union and the United States were becoming mirror images of each other. But despite apparent similarities there is one decisive, all-important difference and that is the distinctive, perhaps unique, American religiousness. . . .

At this point the apparent paradox of America's "deep-rooted sense of historic mission" and its

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prodigal religious diversity is resolved. Americans really believe in religious freedom and believe in freedom religiously. This is our national character and destiny, and the reason that America is "a nation with the soul of a church." Hence, totalitarianism, including its ecclesiastical forms, is anathema. It goes against our grain. . . .

Totalitarianisms do not honor the eternal order of things and violate the spiritual freedom which is the defining essence of being truly human. They are themselves, as Reinhold Niebuhr and many others have pointed out, false and perverse religions. As Niebuhr also pointed out, Americans have no reason to be complacent, since the impulse to tyrannize is universal. But the record shows that Americans have always on the whole resisted the "spirit of corporate dominion" in the realm of religion. Given our past and our virtually unique religiousness in the world today, we have no reason to doubt that amid the vicissitudes of history, the individual's depth of religious freedom and its public defense will continue to provide Americans with access to an eternal order of things, from which perspective it is clear that *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

WILLIAM D. GEOGHEGAN
Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Maine

PETER L. BERGER writes:

Two letter-writers find me "provocative," one "stimulating." I am mulling over the question of whether this constitutes faint praise, or indeed praise at all. In the meantime, I will respond to what I provoked and/or stimulated in the minds of these three readers.

In Rabbi Mittleman's mind, I'm afraid, I stimulated a fantasy. Just about the last thing I believe in with regard to human history is some sort of quasi-Hegelian dialectic in which symbol systems succeed one another as thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. This is not what my article proposed, nor is it a tacit assumption underlying what it did propose. The central question is very far from metaphysics and very much one of empirical assessment: does a modern society require integrating symbols? Some social scientists have suggested that it does not, that it functions as a pragmatic arrangement similar to, say, the traffic system of a contemporary city: people generally obey the rules not because of deeply-held shared beliefs but because it is in their interest to do so. I very much doubt whether this position is tenable. In this, I happen to agree with the majority of social thinkers of the last two centuries. Thus, the sharp reduction in shared symbols in modern Western societies constitutes a serious problem and possibly also a severe crisis.

The Christian Right is important not because it is "a historical *deus ex machina*," but because, in plain empirical fact, it embodies the beliefs and aspirations of a significant segment of the American people. I neither acclaim nor approve this fact, but I think that it ought to be acknowledged. I also think that, for very practical reasons of civic peace, the rest of us should seek to draw this group of fellow citizens into open and constructive conversation. Precisely this, incidentally, is what Richard John Neuhaus has been doing very effectively in the Center on Religion and Society. I agree with Rabbi Mittleman that there are many things happening in this fundamentalist world that are disturbing to anyone committed to civility and pluralism. But surely this is not the only disturbing development on the American scene today. In the liberal academic milieu that is my social habitat, there are massive threats to both civility and pluralism, none of them coming from the Christian Right.

I gather that Leigh D. Jordahl basically agrees with my view of the current situation in American religion. I have no quarrel either with his account of how Will Herberg and I were understood, or rather misunderstood, by many "bright, articulate types" in the 1960's. This misunderstanding greatly troubled me then, and it still troubles me. I console myself with the thought that much greater writers than I am have been misread and then shanghaied in support of causes deeply repugnant to them. I have done what I could by publicly protesting, correcting, reformulating. It seems that I have been successful in that many of the aforementioned bright types now look upon me as an enemy.

If I may slightly vulgarize William D. Geoghegan's argument, he seems to be saying that there cannot have been a Protestant establishment because the Protestant principle does not allow it. Even if one stipulated that American Protestantism has been as individualistic as he makes it out to be (which is very doubtful—wasn't there such a thing as the covenant?), this would not imply that such individualism manifested itself in society in an unvaryingly pristine form. History, alas, is not simply a sequence of "principles." It is, rather, a series of messy and often illogical compromises between "principles" (ideas) and a variety of hard social interests. There *was* once a Protestant establishment. It did indeed embody some "principles," including emphatically the idea of the sovereignty of the individual and his conscience, but it included a lot of other ideas too, some of them in tension with its individualism.

Be that as it may, what Mr. Geoghegan really does not like is the sociological way of looking at the world. That, of course, is his privilege. But even so, he should be able to distinguish between theological and sociological discourse, in my own writing or anywhere else. An attempt to understand the social realities of contemporary American religion is not "worn-out Marxist class analysis," but, quite simply, the stock in trade of social science. *Theologically*, perhaps, one may want the church "to produce mystics and saints." Does one have to be a sociologist to recognize that the church occasionally fails in this noble endeavor? But when Mr. Geoghegan speaks about the fundamental contradiction between the Protestant spirit and any form of totalitarianism, needless to add, I couldn't agree with him more. I am sure that this agreement between him and me is more important than differences of opinion about the uses of sociology.

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Will Gorbachev Reform the Soviet Union?

Vladimir Bukovsky

THE current "crisis" of the Soviet system about which everybody has been talking must seem very strange to an outside observer: there are no starving crowds or dead bodies along the roads, no riots or clashes with the police, virtually nothing to show or hide on the evening news. Of course, Soviet economic performance is appalling: GNP growth has declined almost to zero; and a 30-percent decrease in oil production has been aggravated even further by the recent drop in the price of oil. To this, add obsolete industrial equipment, chronically ill agriculture, and nearly catastrophic environmental problems, and the resulting picture will seem frightening enough. Yet within the Soviet system, only a fundamental challenge to the principles upon which the regime is built can be seen as a true crisis, and then that challenge can only be taken with full seriousness if it is described in the terminology of Marxism-Leninism.

Such a description is precisely what has been given by Professor Tatyana Zaslavskaya in her famous "Novosibirsk Document." This influential scholar (the new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev himself uses many of her definitions in his speeches) sees the cause of Soviet economic problems in

> the lagging of the system of production relations, and hence of the mechanism of state management of the economy which is its reflection, behind the level of development of the productive forces.

Lest anyone wonder about the actual meaning of her definition, Professor Zaslavskaya quotes a classic Marxist formula describing what actually happens in a time of contradiction between "productive forces" and "the system of production relations":

> There ensues either a period of acute socio-economic and political cataclysms within the given formation, which modify and readjust production relations to the new mode of production, or there comes an epoch of a general crisis of the given social formation and of its downfall caused by a social revolution.

Nor, she adds, is a socialist society miraculously exempt from this general rule:

> Attempts at improving production relations, bringing them into greater correspondence with the new demand of productive forces, . . . cannot run their course without conflict.

The Soviet people, then, should brace for a new spell of class struggle in their classless society (or a struggle of "interest groups," as Professor Zaslavskaya tactfully calls them), because a

> radical reorganization of economic management essentially affects the interests of many social groups, to some of which it promises improvements, but to others a deterioration in their position.

And no class (or "interest group") in history has been known to give up its position without a struggle.

Not surprisingly, Professor Zaslavskaya becomes vague and inconsistent, even evasive, when she defines the "social group" whose interests are antagonistic to the goal of social progress, and whose position, therefore, must "deteriorate" in the forthcoming class struggle. She talks about an "intermediate link of the management" which has acquired more rights and responsibilities than those on the top and at the bottom. She alludes to some bureaucrats at the top who do not want to have more responsibilities requiring better professional qualifications than they possess. She also mentions some officials who "occupy comfortable positions with high incomes and vaguely defined responsibilities." And she describes a general tendency within the Soviet system to reward those who are more docile instead of those who are more gifted and efficient.

However, these generalized descriptions of personality types and tendencies cannot serve as a substitute for a clear definition of a social group (with common economic interests and a certain place in the system of production relations, as required for Marxist analysis). She comes very

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close to naming this mysterious group when she says that the "central element in the system of production relations is the dominant form of ownership of the means of production"—a classic Marxist formula. But if she went a bit further and actually named the culprit, she would no longer be an influential Soviet scholar but a dissident, because every schoolboy in the Soviet Union knows that under socialism the means of production belong to the Communist party apparatus, acting on behalf of the "proletariat."

This is exactly the group (or "New Class," as Milovan Djilas called it long ago) which occupies the cushiest positions with high incomes and vaguely defined responsibilities, which rewards the docile instead of the gifted, and whose interests are opposed to a radical reorganization of economic management. When Professor Zaslavskaya speaks about the need to shift from "administrative methods to economic means of management," when Gorbachev, echoing her, emphasizes the need to give more "independence and rights" to enterprises, and when he, finally, says that "It is impossible to achieve any tangible results in any sphere of activity as long as a party official substitutes for a manager," one has little doubt as to whose interests will be affected by this "reorganization."

The emerging dilemma is truly paradoxical: if the party retains its control over the economy, socialism will be endangered and will finally collapse; if, however, the party loses its control over the economy (and, therefore, its control over Soviet society), what Gorbachev calls "the position of socialism in the modern world" will collapse just as surely.

In short, the implacable logic of Marxist-Leninist analysis predicts the inevitable demise of socialism. Here indeed is a fundamental crisis of the entire system.

THAT system grew out of the compromise between revolutionary ideology and reality that the Communists were forced to make from the very beginning.

According to Lenin's own theory, the state was supposed to "die out" under socialism. Yet so long as the Communist state was encircled by powerful capitalist enemies, its power had to grow in order to survive and to promote revolution throughout the world. The Soviet state emerged out of this contradiction, according to the laws of dialectics.

The new system of government was proclaimed to be a "dictatorship of the proletarians," which in practical terms meant a dictatorship of the "advance-guard of the proletarians"—the Communist party—ruling on behalf of the proletarians. At that time, the proletarians—industrial workers and poor peasants—constituted barely 10 percent of the population, while the party members constituted about 10 percent of the proletarians. Leaving aside the scope of terror needed for such a tiny minority to rule dictatorially, "partocracy" was the only possible way to resolve the new regime's fundamental contradiction.

Thus, behind the backs of everyone and every governmental institution, there developed a party "shadow government"—the Central Committee of the CPSU and its respective Departments—overseeing and directing every aspect of work in accordance with ideological requirements. Today, after nearly seventy years, this network of party cells penetrates every institution, from top to bottom, in order to guarantee that each party directive will be carried out to the letter.

The Foreign Ministry of the USSR, like a foreign ministry in any normal state, is preoccupied with its professional duties of maintaining relations, promoting trade, negotiating agreements, and in general advancing the national interests of the Soviet state. But at the same time, the International Department of the Central Commitee is promoting world revolution and making sure that the interests of Communist ideology are given priority over any considerations of diplomacy.

The Ministry of Education is concerned with preparing qualified specialists in every sphere of activity, but its counterparts in the Central Committee are concerned with making a good builder of Communism out of every student. And the Central Committee's task is given priority when it comes to promotions and appointments, as well as to the content of educational programs.

The Ministry of Defense is responsible for the security of the country, and for training good soldiers and officers. But a corresponding Department of the Central Committee, acting through a Chief Political Directorate of the Army, makes sure that these soldiers are good *Soviet* soldiers, the liberators of humanity from the chains of capitalism.

The Ministry of Culture is charged with promoting art, literature, and entertainment. But being subordinate to the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee, its main concern is effective propaganda on behalf of the official ideology. Accordingly, it becomes a ministry of political censorship, weeding out the "wrong" tendencies and promoting the "right" ones.

The intelligence service has the job of collecting military and strategic information about potential enemies, but disinformation, organization of mass movements, "liberation movements," international terrorism, drug smuggling, etc.—in short, organization of any activity which might destabilize, confuse, or scare other countries into submission—is even more important.

The double structure—established in every sphere of life and on all levels: national, district, regional, local, with vertical and horizontal subordination—is a perfect instrument of control and an ideal system for maintaining socialism at home and spreading it abroad. For the Soviet state

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is not a state in the traditional meaning of the word; it is the material and operational base of the world socialist revolution. Internally, it maintains a regime of occupation; externally, a state of permanent ideological war. Each needs and feeds the other.

Of course, the double structure of the Soviet state did not appear overnight, but evolved during the civil war and the subsequent struggle within the party. Initially, party control over the governmental apparatus was introduced because most of the specialists were former "class enemies" and could not be trusted. Even in the Red Army during the civil war, former czarist officers had to be conscripted by the Communists to lead the troops. Since they had to fight against their former colleagues and friends in the White Army, instances of "treason" were quite likely. Therefore, political commissars were appointed to each unit to watch over the officers.

The same was true in other areas, such as education or industry, where old czarist teachers and engineers were equally mistrusted as "class enemies." The party was small (some estimates show 115,000 members on January 1, 1918; 250,000 in March 1919), and consisted of mostly uneducated people (even by 1927 only 1 percent had graduated from universities, 8 percent had graduated from elementary school, while over 25 percent were registered as "self-educated," and 2 percent were completely illiterate). For a party of proletarians, this was as it should be.

To say that is not to make a joke, but to point to a very serious contradiction which was never resolved by the leadership. On the one hand, a party of proletarians ruling on behalf of the working class must have in its ranks a clear majority of workers. And indeed, demand for real proletarians was so great that only complete imbeciles were left in the factories or on the farms where they started. On the other hand, this practice, continuing almost until the present day, created an ill-educated and incompetent party bureaucracy.

As far as the "specialists" were concerned, in due course most were replaced by the new "Soviet specialists," often members of the party. Thus, in the army only 4,500 former czarist officers out of 50,000 were still serving by 1930. The number of party "specialists" in the governmental apparatus increased from 5 percent in 1923 to 20 percent in 1927. But the practice of party control through political commissars persisted, creating conflicts between the more competent specialist and his party controllers, who were usually less competent but more influential.

The considerable resentment thus accumulated acquired a new dimension after Lenin's death in 1924 and became an essential part of the internal struggle in the party under the new General Secretary, Stalin.

Stalin had to build his personal authority in a tough competition with "old revolutionaries," who even in 1927 constituted three-quarters of the leadership, while being only 1.4 percent of the total membership. By combining promotion of new members with purges of old, and by increasing the power of the party apparatus, Stalin consolidated his position. This meant an even more complete double structure. In 1925, the apparatus constituted only 2.5 percent of the membership; by 1939, it was 10 percent. After the mass terror of the 1930's, the party could not be challenged by anybody. Its power became enormous, its privileges huge. Total membership was 1,589,000 and at least half of them were no longer proletarians. Thus, the formation of a double structure was completed by the end of the 1930's, with its innermost core—the party apparatus—reaching its maximal power.

This new class of bosses, of professional leaders, and of organizers was and has remained the very embodiment of revolutionary ideology, its priests and caretakers. For without the ideology, they are nothing but a bunch of careerists and cynical parasites. As long as ideology reigns, however, they are omnipotent. There is no law, human or natural, which they cannot cancel: "Our task," declared one of them, "is not to study the economy, but to change it. We are not bound by any law. There are no such fortresses which Bolsheviks could not storm."

After Stalin's death, the appalling state of the Soviet economy and its centralized inflexibility forced Khrushchev to attempt a reorganization. Basically, he tried to subordinate the party to the economy, so to speak, by giving priority to economic factors over ideological ones. To no avail. The people he shifted and shuffled were the same old party bureaucrats, and bureaucracy only multiplied as a result of all his desperate efforts to loosen central control of the economy.

Khrushchev was pensioned off as a "voluntarist" who rocked the boat too much, but the problem refused to depart with him. His successors, Kosygin and Brezhnev, divided the functions of state and party leadership between them. Kosygin represented the interests of the government (and, therefore, the need for reforms), while Brezhnev embodied the interests of the party apparatus. However, it soon became clear which of these two sets of interests was the more important. Kosygin's reforms turned out to be modest: all he achieved was to insist that state-run enterprises should be self-sufficient and should bring profits instead of losses. Even this simple economic wisdom was never fully accepted. Kosygin's reforms were largely watered down by his colleagues from the party apparatus and then quietly sabotaged by the middle management of the bureaucracy.

Still, Kosygin's efforts were not entirely in vain: his campaign for reforms generated debates

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within the Soviet hierarchy, and a barely noticeable split into two trends: "managers" and "ideologists" (the actual terms they used). Certainly, there was no questioning by the managers of Communist ideology or its ultimate goals. Rather, the argument was over how to achieve these goals better and more efficiently. According to Marx, said the managers, economic relations are the essence of history, a material force which moves society, and we are Marxists, are we not? Indeed, we are, replied the ideologists, but Lenin wrote that the "idea which comes to possess the masses becomes a material force," and we are Leninists, are we not?

As this debate proceeded, a number of interesting new industrial experiments were carried out, and these were written up ecstatically in the Soviet newspapers of the 1960's. But this early euphoria evaporated as it became evident that the experiments illustrated all too clearly the superiority of capitalist over socialist methods. Although these capitalist methods would undoubtedly foster more rapid economic growth, the state would no longer maintain its control over economic life. More importantly, party control of the economy would be rendered both superfluous and impossible. As between economic growth and party control, the choice fell on the latter. And with good reason.

There are currently 18 million party members, roughly 6.5 percent of the population, or about 10 percent of its adult part. The ruling elite, the *nomenklatura*, is estimated at between 3 and 5 million, families included. It is impossible to determine how many of them are "ideologists," but whatever they believe in, they stand to lose a great deal, perhaps even everything, from a real diminution of party control. Because it is to the party, not to their skills or talents, that they owe their positions, they would have no chance of remaining on the same level in any other socio-political system (if, indeed, there is such a level of power and privilege under any other system). Besides, many might be held responsible for crimes and corruptions committed in the service of the regime, if this regime were ever to change dramatically (as has happened in China).

For these reasons, the partocrats prefer a longer course of economic decline, a slower way of death, should the worst become inevitable. Dangerous as such a continuous decline of the Soviet economy is, it would mean only a *gradual* defeat of the socialist forces, with the ultimate catastrophe postponed for perhaps fifteen to twenty years. By contrast, radical economic reforms mean for the partocrats an immediate ouster and a loss of status, and without even any guarantee that the cause of socialism can thereby be saved.

On the other hand, the "managers" apparently think that they do not stand to lose anything, except their ideological chains. Being competent specialists, better educated, and more confident, they believe they will remain on the same level (or even higher) in a more competitive society. The top echelon of "managers" in the *nomenklatura* probably hope to become the sole masters of the country once the partocrats are removed.

Somebody has already said of this new class of managers or "meritocrats" that they are "the gravediggers of Communism." In the long run, perhaps, they may turn out to be just that. But let us have no illusions: these "reformers" are no more eager than the old partocrats to bury Communism. Being specialists, they are willing to run the risk of reforms in order to save the socialist cause. Being younger, they do not want to preside over the downfall of their regime. It is less clear, however, how much they understand of the system's limitations on the one hand or the possible consequences of needed reforms on the other.

And Gorbachev? Is he one of them, as many seem to believe? We do not really know, but assuming that he is, he will find himself basically in the same situation Khrushchev did twenty years ago. His reforms will have to be implemented through the same party apparatus whose power they inevitably serve to diminish. And since the General Secretary has no other instrument of control over the country, by reducing the power of the party apparatus he will be reducing his own as well.

During Andropov's brief reign, according to some accounts, "hundreds of persons who held real power either in Moscow or in the provinces were removed. Thousands of middle-echelon officials were replaced or shifted to other duties." The purge continues, but even if Gorbachev places like-minded people in every position of influence in the country, he is bound to discover what Napoleon discovered when he appointed his brother to be the "king" of a conquered country: the brother became a real king in due course, and acted accordingly. Khrushchev made a similar discovery: it was the very people he himself had chosen and promoted who removed him when they felt he had gone too far.

This structural constraint alone makes far-reaching reforms quite impossible. Yet if they do not reach far enough, they will not work. The time when the government could govern, leaving the party to conduct propaganda, is long past. Once revolutionary enthusiasm died, the party had to rely on its exclusive right to promote and to dismiss, to enrich and to impoverish any individual in the country. Now, if people are going to be promoted according to their talents and rewarded according to their performance, who will bother to join the party? And if people are not treated according to their merits, where is the reform?

So far Gorbachev has not unveiled his plan of reorganization. We can only guess its main features from the hints he has dropped in his early speeches. Amid invigorating appeals for better discipline, he emphasizes once again Kosygin's

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principle of "self-sufficiency," which must be introduced this time "in reality," and he threatens, like Khrushchev, to eliminate many bureaucratic governmental institutions. His constant theme is the need to give more rights and independence to enterprises, to simplify central planning, and to institute a "revolutionary shift" to the latest technology. Thus far the program looks like a fairly minimal adjustment within the system.

But Gorbachev's other ideas are bound to be more controversial. For example, his remedy for agriculture is believed to be the "family-based productive link system" (*zveno*) which was tested in experiments of the 1960's with spectacular results but was rejected as an attempt to restore capitalism. The question remains whether Gorbachev will actually try to pursue such ideas.

Two variables will largely determine the answer: first, the behavior of the West; second, the behavior of the Soviet population.

If the West, repeating the mistake it made in the 1970's version of détente, provides assistance on a great scale, then the Soviet regime can get away with minimal reforms for another decade before coming to its next major crisis. In other words, the scale of reform will be inversely proportional to the scale of Western economic assistance.

Moreover, if the West goes on protecting and perpetuating the external Soviet empire by recognizing Soviet client-states and providing them with economic help (Central Europe, Mozambique, Angola, and, perhaps soon, Vietnam), then the economic burden of empire will continue to be reduced and the risk of its collapse will be diminished, thus slowing down the drive for more radical changes in the Soviet economy. If, however, the West dissociates itself from these regimes, and instead supports resistance movements, then the pressure to improve the performance of the Soviet economy will increase dramatically. Equally, any slowdown in military competition, or any sweeping arms-control or arms-reduction agreements, will only serve to reduce the need for reforms.

As for the second variable, the possible response of the Soviet people, the question is how far reform must go in order to evoke their enthusiasm. How big must the new incentives be in order to increase productivity to the required level?

One must remember that at least three generations have grown up under the present system, watching the slow destruction of their country, culture, and fellow countrymen. There is hardly a family which has not experienced repression at some point or other. For three generations these people have been obliged to listen to and to repeat the obvious lies of official propaganda and to be cheerful at the same time because it is antisocial not to be cheerful in a socialist paradise. This contradiction between reality and propaganda alone is sufficient to produce profound psychological damage, to say nothing of the ever-present fear, suspicion, and misery.

The current condition of the Soviet people is not simply one of disillusionment, apathy, or resignation. It is a biological exhaustion, a fatigue of human material. The signs of this are high infant mortality, low birthrate (below replacement level among the Russians and some other nationalities), life expectancy of about sixty, and an exceptionally high percentage of children born physically and mentally handicapped (about 6-7 percent by the end of the 1970's, and projected to be 15 percent by the end of the 1990's). The latter is partly due to massive environmental pollution, but it is mainly a product of alcoholism.

Contrary to popular belief, the current epidemic of alcoholism has little to do with traditional Russian drinking habits. Thus a pre-revolutionary Russian encyclopedia indicates that in 1905 about 50 percent of men and 95 percent of women were total abstainers. (For comparison, per-capita consumption was much smaller than in the United States today.) A document smuggled out of the Soviet Union in 1985 shows an enormous increase in alcohol consumption. It asserts that, in 1979, only 0.6 percent of men and 2.4 percent of women were abstainers, and only 5 percent of young people under age eighteen. In 1983, according to this document, there were 40 million "medically certified alcoholics" in the Soviet Union, and the number was estimated as growing to 80 million by the year 2000, which would be 65 percent of the working population.

In addition to these signs of degeneration, there is widespread dissent. This should not be understood in narrowly political terms; it is broader and deeper than that. Professor Zaslavskaya explains it in the "Novosibirsk Document" as follows:

> Even with the most rigid regimentation of behavior in the economic sphere, the population is always left with a certain choice of reactions to the governmental restrictions, which it does not necessarily . . . accept. Hence a possibility of overt and covert conflicts between the interests of the groups and of the society. When the established norms and rules affect the vital interests of certain groups of the population, . . . the latter often find a way to shirk the restrictions and to satisfy their demands. When the state takes more strict measures to curb undesirable types of activities, the population responds by finding more subtle patterns of behavior, which will secure satisfaction of its demands in the new conditions, etc. Thus, reciprocally oriented behavior and interactions, of the state on the one hand, . . . and of socioeconomic groups, on the other, represent an important part of the social mechanism of economic development.

Needless to say, the same kind of implicit "dialogue" occurs between the regime and society in all spheres of life, not just in economic relations. In the latter sphere this "dialogue" has led to the

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development of a black market of many semi-legal activities, and of corruption and theft of public property. In other spheres, it has led to cultural, nationalist, and political dissent.

The black market is everywhere. A general shortage of consumer goods and food, of services and materials, has made it necessary for the people to develop their own system of distribution. The government has tried to fight it tooth and nail (since the early 1960's, a wide variety of these activities is punishable by death), but the system has continued to grow into a huge and intricate network of underground business and industry. Quite often even the party bosses, top governmental executives, and the police have become involved or have been bribed to cover up this activity. Few have been caught.

One can only guess what effect corruption on this scale is having on the top echelon of power. As far as the general population is concerned, however, the effect has clearly been profound. If nothing else, people have become less dependent on official favors and state distribution, while becoming more and more cash-oriented.

To sum up, nearly seventy years of ruthless and unscrupulous Communist rule have destroyed the trust which may have existed originally between the Soviet rulers and the people. The people can hardly expect significant improvements as a result of any within-the-system reforms because the very idea of this system has outlived itself. But even if the system is dismantled, it could take a couple of generations before the people recover completely. Collectivized farmers have to learn how to be peasants, "proletarians" have to learn how to be workers, surviving craftsmen have to teach their skills to new generations.

Surely, Gorbachev cannot count on the millions of "medically certified alcoholics" to sober up suddenly and to become Stakhanovites, even if he pays them five times the present level of wages. If they were capable of sobering up, they would already have joined one or another of the semi-legal businesses existing in the country. Whatever Gorbachev's reforms are going to be, then, they must appeal to those who are interested in working and earning, which means that they must compete in incentives and rewards with the black market.

It is of some interest to note what Gorbachev wants to do with the economy; it is far more interesting to see what the economy will do with Gorbachev as he learns what Lenin discovered sixty-five years before him: that the "marketplace is stronger" than socialism. The best guess is that Gorbachev will choose socialism—which is to say the rule of the party—over the marketplace. Thus he has only three options: He could introduce no changes, and then philosophically watch over the slow disintegration of the empire, the loss of superpower status, and the final collapse of the system, perhaps within fifteen or twenty years. Second, he could adopt a Chinese-type version of Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP), only to see himself swept away by rising inflation, unemployment, industrial unrest, and disintegration of the party system—and with no real hope of avoiding the final collapse. Third, he could follow the example of Brezhnev in getting the West to bail him out with enough aid and trade to postpone the day of reckoning for several more decades.

In the final analysis, then, it is the West that must choose between the death of Communism in the 20th century and its survival into the 21st.

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Sandinista Anti-Semitism and Its Apologists

Joshua Muravchik, Susan Alberts, Antony Korenstein

In May 1983, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an organization dealing with instances of anti-Semitism worldwide, issued a statement denouncing Sandinista Nicaragua as "a country without Jews, but not without anti-Semitism." The statement set forth the complaints of a number of Nicaraguan Jewish refugees who said that they had been compelled to leave the country on account of threats and harassment by the Sandinistas, that their personal property had been unjustly confiscated, and that their synagogue had been expropriated. The ADL went public with these charges only after having worked fruitlessly behind the scenes for a year-and-a-half to persuade the Nicaraguan government to make restitution to the Jews and to return the synagogue.

The White House quickly invited the ADL's spokesman on this issue, Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, and a couple of the Jewish refugees to address one of the weekly meetings of its Central America Outreach Group, and President Reagan himself was soon echoing the charges of anti-Semitism in speeches defending his policy with regard to Nicaragua.

The Sandinistas were as quick to respond to the ADL's public charges as they had been slow to respond to its private appeals. They vehemently denied that they were anti-Semitic, pointing to the presence of five Jews in leading positions in their own government. As for the synagogue, it had been expropriated, they said, because it was part of the personal property of Abraham Gorn, a wealthy Nicaraguan who had been president of the Jewish community and who was a "Somocista."

As it turned out, the five "Jews" cited by the Sandinistas as evidence of their philo-Semitism may all have had Jewish ancestors, but not one was identified with the Jewish community. The only ones in the group with any religious affiliation at all were practicing Roman Catholics, including Minister of Education (now Ambassador) Carlos Tunnerman and Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal. Cardenal, a Jesuit priest, gained worldwide attention during Pope John Paul II's visit to Nicaragua when newsphotos captured the kneeling priest seeking to kiss the papal ring and receiving instead a stern lecture from the pontiff on the duty of obedience to his bishop. Further to the discredit of the Sandinistas' argument, the Jewish refugees produced a deed of ownership to the synagogue, showing clearly that it was the communal property of the congregation and not of Mr. Gorn.

But if the Sandinistas were less than adept at defending themselves against the charge of anti-Semitism, they soon got help from Americans, some of whom were their supporters, others of whom were not. Ironically, the most important help came from the U.S. embassy in Nicaragua. Ambassador Anthony Quainton looked into the allegations and reported, according to newspaper accounts of his leaked confidential cable to Washington, that "the evidence fails to demonstrate that the Sandinistas have followed a policy of anti-Semitism or have persecuted Jews solely because of their religion." Being "a member of the Jewish religion," the cable went on, "is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition to result in . . . persecution" by the Nicaraguan government.

Although no one questioned the diligence of Ambassador Quainton's investigation, he himself agreed in a letter to Rabbi Rosenthal of the ADL that there was an important gap in his research: virtually all the Jews had already fled Nicaragua, and he was unable to interview them. Moreover, despite the fact that he seemed to deny the gravamen of the accusations of anti-Semitism, Ambassador Quainton's conclusion contained a note of ambiguity, acknowledging as it did that Jewishness could indeed have constituted one contributing factor among several that led to the persecution of Nicaragua's Jews.

Next, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee joined the argument, becoming embroiled in a dispute with Rabbi Rosenthal in the pages of the Jewish press. Rabbi Tanenbaum agreed that some "anti-Semitic acts" had been committed, but he maintained that "anti-Semitism, as opposed to anti-Israel foreign policy, was not

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Sandinist official policy," and that "the real problem with Nicaragua was one of political anti-Israel positions rather than classical theological anti-Semitism, and therefore requires a different response." The quarrel between the two rabbis grew rather heated, but it seemed to be less about the facts of the case than about how to react to them.

The debate over Sandinista anti-Semitism intensified in 1984 when a group called New Jewish Agenda sponsored a delegation to Nicaragua to look into the issue. New Jewish Agenda describes itself as a voice for "progressive" Jews, and takes positions that are often at variance with those of most other Jewish organizations. Domestically, it advocates the use of racial quotas in hiring and promotion; in the Middle East, it calls for the creation of an independent Palestinian state through negotiations between Israel and the PLO.

The delegation's report, signed by eleven of its thirteen members, including Rabbi Marshall Meyer, a prominent former leader of the Jewish community of Argentina, and Hector Timerman, son of Jacobo, said that the group had "searched for any evidence to support charges of anti-Semitism" but that "none were found." The report was rather upbeat about Nicaragua in general, concluding: "It was made abundantly clear to us and confirmed by leaders of the Sandinista government that Nicaragua welcomes Jewish participation as well as participation from any group in the reconstruction of a pluralistic society." The delegation urged Nicaraguan Jewish refugees to "consider taking the government of Nicaragua at its word —that they are welcome back," and it volunteered to "monitor and report on" the treatment of any who returned to Nicaragua.

Despite the claim that no evidence of anti-Semitism could be found, however, the delegation's report itself contained some evidence. It referred to articles in the Sandinista-controlled newspaper, *Nuevo Diario*, alleging that Jews control world finance, and headlines such as "Jews Bomb Beirut." The report did condemn these expressions, but attributed them to "sloppy journalism" and to Nicaragua's "history of sensationalistic, yellow journalism."

The report also acknowledged as fact the Jewish refugees' assertions that the Managua synagogue had been attacked with an incendiary device during worship services in 1978. But the delegation claimed that it could not "satisfactorily resolve" whether the attack had been conducted by Sandinistas, as the worshippers who witnessed it charged, or "was instead attributable to Somoza provocateurs," as Sandinista supporters now suggested.

Finally, in the words of the report, "the question of whether property was confiscated because of its ownership by Jews, or whether regulations governing confiscation were applied to Jews in a discriminatory manner, lies at the heart of allegations of anti-Semitism." The delegation concluded that the answer to both of these questions was no.

BUT these were not, in fact, the questions at the heart of the charges of anti-Semitism. The heart of the charges was that the Sandinista Front had conducted a campaign of harassment and intimidation aimed at Nicaraguan Jews, which caused them to flee. Astonishingly, the report simply failed to address this issue—even though it had been presented directly to the delegation by three of the refugees who met with the group at the Miami airport as it was en route to Managua. Although the report's introduction contained a paragraph describing this meeting, the body of the report omitted any mention of its substance, merely noting in passing: "It is clear to us that [the Jews who fled], many of whom are refugees from the Holocaust, did feel frightened and threatened by the violence and disorder that accompanied the toppling of Somoza. It is not our purpose or place to judge whether . . . such fear was reasonable or justified." This is all the more astonishing since the refugees themselves had told the delegation that what made them feel frightened and threatened was not the random violence and disorder but specific incidents of Sandinista hostility. And the question of whether their fears were generated by real as opposed to imagined persecution was in fact the central question to be raised.

The one member of the delegation who did address this issue was Rabbi Francis Barry Silberg of Milwaukee, who refused to sign the group's report and instead issued a public demurrer. In it he said: "While there appears to have been no program of persecution of Jews in Nicaragua, the Sandinistas' actions have certainly created a climate of concern sufficient for the mass emigration of Jews after the 'triumph of the revolution.' These actions include . . . their inability to distinguish between Judaism and Zionism. . . . Subsequent developments . . . confirmed the wisdom of that flight."

While Rabbi Silberg's dissent received scant attention, the delegation's report was covered in the major media, and it was echoed in two articles in *Moment*, a Left-liberal Jewish monthly, by delegation members Robert Weisbrot, an assistant professor of history at Colby College, and Cynthia Arnson, a congressional aide and a former staff member of the Institute for Policy Studies.

In her article, Miss Arnson charged the Reagan administration with knowing that the claims of anti-Semitism were false. In support of this contention she quoted Ambassador Quainton's cabled doubts that the Sandinistas "have persecuted the Jews solely because of their religion"—but she omitted the word "solely" (without indicating an ellipsis), thus altering the meaning of the passage. She also presented selective quotations from Michael Gale, President Reagan's liaison to the Jewish community, and from Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, to argue that these

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two "representatives of the administration had denied that anti-Semitism was involved in the Nicaraguan saga." In truth, Gale was in the forefront of publicizing the issue of Sandinista anti-Semitism within the administration and Eagleburger, in the very same paragraph from which Miss Arnson quoted, went on to refer to the ADL's allegations. Miss Arnson also reported that a delegation from the State Department's human-rights bureau had visited Nicaragua and investigated the charges of anti-Semitism, finding them baseless. But Elliott Abrams, then the head of the bureau, has denied that such a delegation existed, and Miss Arnson, when challenged, has refused to name its members.

Still more zealous in defending the Sandinistas against the charge of anti-Semitism was Rabbi Balfour Brickner of the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue of New York, a long-time leader in the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform). In 1984 Rabbi Brickner visited Nicaragua; he wrote afterward that it made him feel the way Israel had made him feel "in the late 50's and early 60's," when he liked Israel better than he does today. "Then, Israeli government leaders were as informal and accessible as members of the junta are in Nicaragua today," he wrote. "The inescapable fact," he went on, "is that Israel has been deeply involved in thwarting popular forces for democratic and social change in Latin America, forces similar in ideology to those which brought Israel into existence," and he added: "No wonder she is viewed with sometimes not so quiet resentment and smoldering distrust." As for the Nicaraguan government, not only does it not persecute Jews, "it doesn't persecute Catholics or Protestants either. It does challenge, and sometimes expels, those who, in religious garb, conduct counterrevolutionary activities."

If in this last formulation Rabbi Brickner began to approach the rhetoric of the Sandinistas themselves, a subsequent rumination on the subject went even further toward embracing Sandinista views. Writing in the Washington *Post*, he said: "If Jews fled Managua after the revolution, it was not because the incoming government was anti-Semitic; it was because that government wanted to isolate and strip power . . . from supporters of the dictator who had been overthrown. Of the few Jews who had remained in Managua after the 1972 earthquake, many were strong supporters of Somoza." Where the New Jewish Agenda report had simply elided the refugees' tales of intimidation and persecution, Rabbi Brickner now took the further step of implying that the persecution was justified by the Jews' own past actions.

How did Rabbi Brickner know that the Jews were "Somocistas" without having interviewed them? Apparently, the Sandinistas told him so. They also seem to have told him they were not responsible for the firebombing of the Managua synagogue. Doctoring Ambassador Quainton's words *à la* Cynthia Arnson, Rabbi Brickner characterized the allegations of Sandinista anti-Semitism as a "canard," adding: "and we Jews know it."

Rabbi Brickner's version soon achieved the status of received wisdom. When, earlier this year, President Reagan again cited anti-Semitism on his list of Sandinista misdeeds, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, replied that "It is woefully inappropriate for the President to resurrect these discredited canards." Perhaps more significantly, the New York *Times* relied upon Rabbi Brickner in an editorial criticizing the President: "Of the millions who heard Mr. Reagan describe the 'desecrating and firebombing' of Managua's only synagogue, how many will catch up with the rejoinder, by Rabbi Balfour Brickner . . . ? He says the building was abandoned during street fighting in 1978, a year before the Sandinistas seized power. The rabbi's own investigation in Nicaragua failed to sustain Mr. Reagan's charge of virulent anti-Semitism." On the same day, the Washington *Post* ran a lengthy "news analysis" column by reporter Joanne Omang. She wrote: "Reagan said 'the entire Jewish community [was] forced to flee Nicaragua.' [But] Nicaragua's few Jews closed their synagogue for lack of use, and most who left had backed Somoza. A 1983 State Department inquiry found no evidence of anti-Semitism." Even the Washington *Jewish Week* dismissed the story of persecution as emanating from the testimony of only two refugees.

CURIOUSLY, while various groups and individuals purporting to examine this issue traveled to Nicaragua, where virtually no Jews were left, none sought to track the story to its source—the refugees themselves who were now living mostly in Miami or Costa Rica. In the last few months we have endeavored to do exactly that, interviewing members of each of the refugee families we could locate and who were willing to talk to us. Of the seventeen families that comprised the bulk of the Jewish community prior to the rise of the Sandinistas, we now have accounts from all but two.* From comparing indi-

* All the interviewing was done by Susan Alberts. Although we have no means of evaluating definitively the accuracy of the details of each of the individual accounts we heard, the stories were all compatible. In their general outlines, and in many specific details, they were mutually corroborating, and in no significant respect were they contradictory. In the past, Sandinista representatives and others have challenged the veracity of one or another individual Jew whose complaints were publicized. We find it impossible to imagine that the various stories we heard from refugees living in different countries and cities could have been fabricated and still be as mutually consistent as these were. Indeed, we found no reason to doubt the veracity of any of the individuals we interviewed.

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vidual stories, we believe that we are able to piece together a pretty clear picture of what happened to Nicaraguan Jewry.

Until the Sandinista triumph, the Jewish community comprised approximately fifty individuals. The breadwinners were virtually all engaged in business or commerce, some with small enterprises and some with rather substantial ones. The community maintained a synagogue; although it did not have a rabbi, it conducted regular worship services, and one of its number was always designated as its president. Today, all but two or three individuals live outside of Nicaragua.

Harassment of Jews by the Sandinista Front (FSLN) began during the year prior to its seizure of power. Most Jewish families began receiving abusive and threatening telephone calls, some of them every day, others every few days. The callers identified themselves as Sandinistas, used foul and abusive language, made specific derogatory reference to the Jewishness of their respondents, and uttered death threats both against the heads of households and against their children. In some cases, similar threats and abuse were conveyed in postcards or in graffiti sprayed on Jewish homes and places of business. Some received warnings from friendly employees with links to the Sandinistas, and a few were followed or approached with threatening messages by men on the street whom they did not recognize.

These threats were underscored by an event that occurred during a Friday-night service in December 1978. That night, an incendiary device was hurled at the synagogue, igniting its wooden doors. When some of the worshippers emerged from the building they were confronted by a carload of armed men, recognizable to them as Sandinistas, who pointed guns at them and ordered them back inside. Eventually the assailants fled and the fire was extinguished; the building was not destroyed and none of the worshippers was seriously injured.

Contrary to Rabbi Brickner's assertions, there is evidence to corroborate the victims' claims that the attackers were Sandinistas. Mauricio Palacio, who at the time was employed by one of the Nicaraguan Jews, and is now himself a refugee in the United States after having grown disillusioned with the Sandinistas, has given a signed statement confessing to his part in the 1978 arson attack against the Managua synagogue. The aim of the attack, he says, was not to injure but further to intimidate the Jews. In this it was successful.

As the fighting between FSLN insurgents and Somoza's National Guard reached its climax in the summer of 1979, several Nicaraguan Jews left the country. When the Sandinistas triumphed, these individuals, as well as a couple of others who coincidentally found themselves out of the country on business, had to decide whether to try to return. One who did was the community's president, Abraham Gorn, an elderly businessman and reputed friend of the first Somoza (who had ruled the country until the mid-1950's). Shortly after his return, Gorn was imprisoned by Sandinista authorities for a few weeks, during which time he (like some other prisoners) was compelled to sweep streets. Upon his release he sought refuge in the Costa Rican embassy and secured safe passage out of the country with the assistance of the Costa Rican government.

Another who attempted to go back after the revolution was Sarita Kellerman. (Her husband, Oscar, whom both Kellermans deemed to be in greater danger, remained in the United States.) Night after night, her house was searched by uniformed armed men claiming to look for weapons and pocketing whatever possessions struck their fancy. After a few weeks, she left, not to return.

Some who left the country because of warnings that their lives were in danger never considered returning. Isaac Stavisky was told at gunpoint, "Next time we'll get you, you Jew." Gyula Pinkes and Laszlo Gevurt, business partners, suffered repeated attacks on their homes, during which FSLN combatants shouted, "We know Jews live here." After being warned by a friend whom they took to be well-connected that the FSLN was "coming after the Jews," they fled.

THOSE who remained after July 1979 suffered a pattern of petty harassment which within a year or two impelled them to leave as well. Against the background of these threats, the large radical Arab presence that soon materialized in revolutionary Nicaragua seemed particularly ominous.

The Sandinistas had close and longstanding ties with the PLO and Libya. Many, including Nicaragua's Interior Minister Tomas Borge, had received guerrilla training in PLO camps in Lebanon, and some had participated in PLO operations, such as the 1970 hijacking of an El Al airliner. After the Sandinista revolution, these relations became formalized: both the PLO and Libya began providing economic and military aid, including training, and the PLO opened a fully accredited embassy in Managua, employing scores of operatives. Borge publicly pledged to Yasir Arafat that "the PLO cause is the cause of the Sandinistas."

Like Jews the world over, Nicaragua's Jews felt a sense of emotional attachment to the Jewish state. One, in fact, had acted as Israel's "honorary consul," or good-will ambassador, to Nicaragua. Since the harassment experienced by the Jews was accompanied by the shouting of anti-Israel slogans and the daubing of graffiti associating Zionism with "Somocism," the increasingly strong Sandinista-PLO ties and anti-Zionist tirades in the Sandinista-controlled media became a source of fear for the remaining Jews.

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To add to their fears, the stragglers received hints of other perils lying in wait. Some were told by acquaintances that Sandinista authorities were looking to arrest them or were intending to arrest their colleagues or relatives if they returned to the country. One Jewish store-owner was told by a customer who worked in the prosecutor's office that there was "a file on everyone in the Jewish community."

Within a few years, virtually all the remaining Jews had left. Almost all had their property confiscated, either under a decree aimed at those who "adhered" to "Somocism," a hopelessly vague accusation rarely applied with anything approaching due process, or under a decree declaring that anyone who remained out of the country longer than six months would forfeit his property rights. In addition, the synagogue was expropriated.

All in all, the story of the persecution and flight of Nicaragua's Jews is rather a simple one. Why, then, did it become enmeshed in so much confusion and controversy? In part, the answer is that the Sandinistas work hard at presenting their case, and benefit from the assistance of Americans eager to lend their talents and voices in defense of "the revolution." But in part, too, the fact that the main motivation for the Sandinistas' persecution of the Jews seems to have been an intense animus against Israel may have led various observers who were not necessarily predisposed in favor of the Sandinista government to conclude that what was at work here was not anti-Semitism but the distinguishable phenomenon of anti-Zionism.

In truth, however, it was the Sandinistas who were unable to separate their anti-Zionism from anti-Semitism, just as their Soviet and Palestinian and Libyan brethren have been unable to do. Thus, for example, during the war in Lebanon, the Sandinista newspaper, *Nuevo Diario*, frequently lapsed into explicit anti-Semitism. One story contained the sentence: "Zionists, from Wall Street, the U.S. Congress, and other powerful sectors of the establishment install and depose Presidents [and] determine fundamental aspects of foreign and domestic policy." A week later one could read: "In accordance with the Bible, Israel has committed a capital crime for which she has not yet repented, that is condemning to death and killing the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Christian revolutionaries are called upon to redouble their efforts against the theology of death." And a week later: "For many years the Jews, who crucified Christ, . . . have used the myth of being God's chosen people to justify massacres of the Palestinian people." Two days after that: "The world's money, banking, and finance are in the hands of descendants of Jews, eternal protectors of Zionism." Perhaps most revealing was the headline, "Jews Bomb Beirut," and the speculation that President Reagan—in view of his pro-Israel policy—must have some Jewish blood in him.

In other words, although hatred of Israel rather than hatred of Jews *per se* may have been what motivated the Sandinistas to persecute Jews, persecute them they did—if only because they saw the Jewish community as a whole as an extension of Israel.

The Sandinistas and their apologists now often claim that the Jews were Somocistas, but in fact there is little evidence of this. Abraham Gorn and perhaps one or two others of the wealthiest families did have business and/or social relations with the Somoza clan, but the majority of Jews did not. Moreover, there is little reason to believe that even those who did have ties to Somoza contributed in any material way to keeping him in power, such as by participating in military or political life. The Sandinistas claim to have a letter showing that Gorn made deliveries of supplies to the National Guard, but Gorn was in the textile business, and no one has shown that the supplies in question were anything but clothing.

What is true is that, as a group, Nicaraguan Jews were middle class, and this made them natural targets of Sandinista hostility. Sandinismo, after all, is a variant of Marxism, and along with everything else it has inherited from that ideology it would seem to have inherited a hatred of the middle class and a predisposition to extend that hatred to Jews. It was Marx who wrote: "What is the worldly cult of the Jew? Huckstering. What is his worldly god? Money." In an echo of this, Herty Lewitas, the Sandinista Minister of Tourism, son of a Catholic mother and a Jewish father who separated himself from the Jewish community some decades ago, told the New Jewish Agenda delegation, "I remember when I was growing up that many of the Nicaraguan Jews used to say, 'Our country is the world, and our flag is the dollar.'" It is more likely that Lewitas was "remembering" not something Jews themselves said but something that was said about them.

Whatever the motivations behind Sandinista behavior toward Jews, the essential fact is that a tiny community—some fifty individuals—was compelled to flee. This is not a very big story; it pales in comparison, for example, with that of Nicaragua's Miskito Indians, thousands of whom have also been compelled to flee and hundreds of whom have died. But it is a true story, and a revealing one—revealing about the regime that has perpetrated this evil, and unfortunately revealing as well about those in this country, including some Jews, who have denied or defended it.

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The Demotion of Man

Peter Shaw

IN THE 20th century, the ordered universe broke apart into atoms, and man found himself alone. William Butler Yeats expressed the new sense of breakdown in a famous phrase, "the center cannot hold" (from his poem "The Second Coming"); it is at the heart as well of T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," surely the best known modern poem, with its no less famous ending, "These fragments I have shored against my ruins." The American novelist Walker Percy, alluding to Yeats, recently summed up this conception, which has dominated the modern imagination right up to the present, in the following words:

> I think it fair to begin with the assumption, which seems fairly obvious, that, as the poet said, the center is not holding; that the consensus, while it might not have disappeared, is at least seriously called into question. Indeed, to judge from a good many contemporary novels, films, and plays, it often appears that the only consensus possible is a documentation of the fragmentation.

The lost consensus to which Walker Percy refers is one which stretched back, changes and permutations notwithstanding, for centuries. The Renaissance scholar E.M.W. Tillyard, in *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1943), describes the form it took in Shakespeare's time. As epitomized in Ulysses's speech on degree in *Troilus and Cressida*, a great chain of being was imagined, extending vertically in logical, hierarchical steps from the highest to the lowest spheres of the universe. On the earth, rulers held sway over their subjects, fathers over their families, and man dominated the lower animals. The essential order of things was expressed in the harmonies of music and the rhythm and rhyme of poetry.

It was precisely the loss of this sense of order and authority that Eliot and Yeats mourned, a loss that found formal expression in the early 20th century in musical disharmony and free verse. Yet if the 20th century as a whole has been characterized by the conviction that we are living in a fragmented universe, the truth is that a coherent and ordered picture of the world has nevertheless gradually emerged and in the last decades has taken on definable form. The new picture is, in fact, modeled exactly on the old idea of an ordered hierarchical universe, except that the terms have been systematically reversed. Where once man was at the top of this order—only a little lower than the angels—now he is somewhere near the bottom; and where once his authority was taken to be divinely inspired and ordained, now it has come to be seen as a kind of usurpation.

The traditional justification for man's dominion over the earth, namely his superiority over other creatures, has now been challenged. After all, it is argued, animals, too, communicate and reason, they have emotions, and what is more they are on the whole less destructive than man. And as with animals, so with primitive man and with societies less developed than our own: both are closer to the sources of natural wisdom, and both wreak less damage upon the ecosystem and biosphere than does Western man.

By analogous reasoning, the earliest human societies, with their pre-capitalist forms of organization, are seen as the best. Here, unlike in earlier attempts to celebrate the past over the present, which tended to favor the high achievements of classical civilization, the contemporary world view elevates the simplicities of past times. As for the future, that ultimate expression of the present, it is seen in the new perspective not as a hoped-for culmination but as a looming epoch of decline, a nightmare of overpopulation, cancer, famine, ecocide, nuclear winter.

The work of hierarchy reversal proceeds on many different fronts, and is undeterred even by such seeming obstacles as the Darwinian theory of biological adaptation, with its suggestion of progress upward to an apex that is man. "From a strict evolutionary point of view," writes one contemporary biologist, Bernard Rollin,

> there is no top of the ladder, there is only a branching tree. If there is a "top," it has to do with adaptability and species durability and reproductive success. In that case, the rat shares billing with us and we both lose to the cockroach.

The unfavorable comparison of man with cockroach has become a familiar staple of biological discussion—although Stephen Jay Gould is ready to take a stunning step even further down the scale:

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> Evolution is a copiously branching network, not a ladder, and I do not see how we, the titular spokesmen for a few thousand mammalian species, can claim superiority over three quarters of a million species of insects who will surely outlive us all, not to mention the bacteria, who have shown remarkable staying power for more than three billion years.

Here we have very nearly the ultimate demotion of man, the inferior not only of primitive peoples, other mammals, and the cockroach, but even of bacteria.

But there is still more—or, rather, less. It has remained for contemporary poetry to accomplish a fully imagined reduction of man beneath the status of cockroaches and bacteria. In his 1978 survey, "How to Read the Contemporary Poem," the critic Paul Breslin points out that "the most popular key word in the new poetry" is "stone," standing for the "furthest things from the human —the least conscious, the simplest, the most innocent." What stones represent in the contemporary world picture may be gathered from an interview, cited by Breslin, with the Pulitzer prize-winning poet Galway Kinnell. "If you could go even deeper" on the contemporary scale, says Kinnell,

> you'd not be a person, you'd be an animal; and if you went deeper still, you'd be a blade of grass, eventually a stone. If a stone could speak, your poem would be its words.

Beyond this, surely, it is impossible to go, though if one considers the matter carefully enough, it is evident that there must be a reverse hierarchy among stones themselves, from the least valuable (diamonds, surely) to the most (perhaps the friable, vulnerable sandstone).

THE strength of a world picture may be said to lie in its capacity to sustain itself in the face of contradictions. Thus, some lines written by John Donne a few years after the death of Queen Elizabeth indicate how it must have felt when the world picture of the time came under threat. Alluding to the philosophical repercussions of the idea that the universe might not be earth-centered, Donne observed that the

> . . . new Philosophy calls all in doubt
> . . . . . .
> 'Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone;
> All just supply, and all Relation:
> Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne, are things forgot.

Something like the confusion registered by Donne manifests itself (though not always with Donne's frankness) whenever our own contemporary world picture is threatened.

Of course, where post-Elizabethans were disturbed by evidence that the universe and the earth had not evolved in a harmonious fashion, those who hold the new view feel threatened by evidence of the opposite kind, and specifically evidence militating against the theory that the universe originated in a giant explosion—a big bang. This theory, suggesting chance and randomness as the underlying principles of the universe, supplies nothing that can be taken to ennoble man, and therefore offers satisfactions that are fully the equivalents of those the earth-centered universe of Ptolemy offered to the medieval and early-Renaissance minds. When evidence appears that would seem to contradict randomness—and in some fields, such evidence has been accumulating —it is routinely dismissed. In this respect, at least, the contemporary world picture is as efficacious as any that preceded it.

When it comes to geological history, chance and discontinuity have been wrung from the record with missionary zeal. Starting in the early 1970's, the mysterious disappearance of the dinosaurs came to be explained by a theory with negative implications for man in two ways. Purportedly, the dust from the crash of a meteorite, a sort of earthly big bang, blocked out the sun for a number of years, thereby depriving the dinosaurs of food. It could thus be concluded that man's survival as a species was due not so much to his adaptability as to the chance escape from catastrophe of his mammalian predecessors. At the same time, the prehistoric catastrophe served as a warning: through a similar blockage of the sun—this time in a nuclear winter brought on by the use of atomic weapons—man could bring about his self-destruction.

In 1985, however, paleontologists marshaled geological evidence that the extinction of the dinosaurs occurred over too long a period of time to be reconciled with a scenario of catastrophe. Then it emerged that most paleontologists—some 96 percent—had never credited the catastrophe theory in the first place, but had felt constrained to remain silent in the face of their opponents' moral fervor concerning the threat of nuclear war. To such an extent can the need to adhere to a world picture compromise scientific objectivity.

That the demeaning of man in the new world picture rests on a rather tenuous basis in observation has been repeatedly demonstrated by anthropological and ethnographic contretemps similar in their outlines to the fate of dinosaur catastrophism. The deciphering of the ancient Mayan hieroglyphs, for example, has made it possible to describe the life of that people, and incidentally to interpret the symbolic drawings accompanying their hieroglyphic script. The drawings turn out to depict a range of cruel tortures and self-lacerations. "Before going to war, for example," says a report in the New York *Times*, "the king would puncture his penis with a stingray spine, while his wife drew a thorn-barbed rope through her tongue." The Mayans were frequently at war,

> in large part to capture aristocrats for torture and sacrifice. If the Maya sacrificed humans in lesser numbers than the Aztecs, against whom they have often been held up as superior, they

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tortured their victims more viciously. Ancient ball games, like Roman gladiatorial contests, pitted captives against one another for their lives; the heads of losers were sometimes used for balls.

These discoveries are of interest both in themselves and for the light they throw on the scholars who have been surprised by them. As the *Times* reports, "Evidence of these darker practices has been available for decades in the Maya's stone reliefs and paintings," but scholars had explained it all away, interpreting the reliefs and paintings in such a manner as to place the Maya "on a mist-shrouded pedestal as austere, peaceful . . . students of the stars and the calendar." The pictures, in other words, functioned as virtual Rorschach tests, onto which their interpreters projected a collective wish to find in Meso-American prehistory an indigenous people at once gentle and mystical and accomplished in science and the arts.

Now that a rather different portrait of the Maya has emerged, a scramble is occurring to keep the bigger world picture in place. If, as the *Times* reports, the "new image" of the Mayans "is less romantic, it is also more human, scholars are quick to assert." Thus Professor David Friedel, an anthropologist at Southern Methodist University, believes that the self-laceration practiced by kings in advance of going to war in search of torture victims "indicates a cooperative, sacred relationship between the elites and the commoners." In other words, if the evidence shows a society's aristocrats obsessed with self-mutilation and torture, a bit of interpretation will help us see beneath the surface to the class solidarity so characteristic of pre-Columbian America and so lamentably missing from the modern world.

To the north of the Mayans, the American Indians inhabiting what is now the United States fit into the new world picture as well—not so much exemplars of a superior civilization as object lessons demonstrating the defects of our own. The displacing of the Indians has long been a source of shame to enlightened consciences; modern historical accounts commonly include a broad indictment of the early American colonists and their descendants on this score. In the latest perspective, the actions of the colonists are often cited as examples of "exploitation" and "commodity capitalism," while Indians are portrayed as having lived in benign relationship with the land until introduced to anti-ecological practices by the whites. Such is the thesis of William Cronon's *Changes in the Land*, a recent, much-praised ecological history of colonial New England that has won the Francis Parkman prize of the Society of American Historians.

Yet here, too, the evidence has proved to be shaky. At least one scholarly reviewer of Cronon's book felt bound to point to "a body of evidence" showing that colonial agricultural practices did not rape and deplete the land, as Cronon has it, but rather were "carried on without plows, on fields that were fallowed far more frequently than he concedes." As for the Indians, "they burned the woods, sometimes usefully but at other times more harmfully, and before moving on registered a heavy impact on the land on which their fields and villages were situated."

More interesting than this refutation, however, is the spirit in which it is presented. For the reviewer judges the book as a whole to be one "of impressive originality" and "penetrating scholarship," and he is at pains to assert that the factual refutations in his review in no way damage the book's thesis. After all, the "ultimate effect" of American settlement "was very much as Cronon has so brilliantly and provocatively described it." Thus, it does not matter whether an author is right or wrong concerning the period he has chosen for study, so long as he holds the right view of modern civilization.

The effects of a scholarly orthodoxy on those who dissent from it can be seen in the case of Alden Vaughan's 1965 book, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620-1675*. Even before Vaughan's book appeared, a consensus had grown according to which, in Vaughan's words, the Puritans "appropriated the natives' land, bargained unscrupulously for their furs, and abused individual Indians with impunity." But Vaughan, starting out in perfect accord with this view, and wanting only to offer a more detailed account than any that existed for the earliest period of New England settlement, was surprised to find that "the evidence suggested a more humane and equitable treatment of the natives." The Puritan colonists had "sought peaceful and equitable methods of acquiring land and furs, administering justice, and recruiting converts": they had tried "to deal justly and peacefully with their Indian neighbors."

Although Vaughan's book was favorably received on its initial appearance, it soon enough came under attack as its conclusions were increasingly seen to violate the orthodoxy of the time. In one disputed instance, that of the war between the Puritans and the Pequots, Vaughan's critics found not just that he was wrong in assigning blame to the Pequots but that the war was an act of Puritan "genocide." No matter that the Pequot tribe was not annihilated. No matter that here and elsewhere the historical record failed to support the charge of genocide. The Puritans, the new scholars declared, must have destroyed the relevant documents.

In the face of this assault, Vaughan was forced into retreat. In 1979 he brought out a revised version of his book in which he muted both his defense of the Puritan settlers and his exposures of Indian atrocities. Vaughan writes in his 1979 preface that on reflection he had overstated the case for the Puritans. And as for the Pequot war,

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"I am less sure than I was fifteen years ago that the Pequots deserve the burden of blame." Still, a careful reader will note that Vaughan never really yields on the substantive issues, and in his footnotes he makes it clear that the new historians have built their case on a misuse of scholarship. In the end, Puritan "genocide" turns out to be another catastrophe that never occurred—but also another scholarly article of faith to doubt which can be damaging to one's reputation.

DOUBT of any kind has hardly affected the new world picture of primitive peoples and their virtues. In the early 1970's, for example, two primitive societies were discovered and presented to the world: the gentle Tasaday of the Philippines and the benighted Ik of Uganda. Both were much exploited in the service of demonstrating the degeneracy of civilization.

In 1971 a dozen natives and their children were discovered living in the rain forest on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. In *The Gentle Tasaday,* John Nance, the reporter who first publicized the discovery, wrote in personal terms of the lesson these near-naked people teach to civilized man. As against "the popular image of Stone Age man, hulking and grunting, crude and dull," the Tasaday knew no cruelty or evil. They were ignorant of "killing, murder, war"; they did not so much as punish their children. When asked to describe evil, they replied: "We can't think of anything that is not good."

Charles Lindbergh, appropriately enough a member with Nance of the large, media-event expedition that quickly made its way to the Tasaday, expounded further on their significance for modern man. "The rise of intellect has coincided with the decline of natural life," Lindbergh explained. Technology, produced by intellect, has "taken us to a stage where life itself is endangered, man included. We are destroying our environment through pollution." For both him and Nance, the answer to this danger lay in the countercultural ideal of "touch and tenderness," epitomized by the Tasaday with their "simple beauty, their mysterious purity."

As it happens, the enthusiastic reception accorded to Nance's book revealed far more about the self-image of contemporary civilized man than was ever revealed about the two dozen Tasaday, who were only briefly visited before being cut off from the outside world. Nance, in fact, had himself originally set out to expose the early reports of the Tasaday as a hoax, perpetrated (as he then thought) by a flamboyant official of the Marcos government named Manuel Elizalde. Nance had been taken to the Tasaday under suspicious circumstances. Elizalde let him see the group only after he himself had gone ahead to meet with them, by his own admission arranging for them to remove their clothing and don orchid leaves, which he claimed to have been their authentic dress up until the time they were discovered. He then seated them on a log and finally presented them to Nance, who found their pose "too perfect." But at precisely this moment, Nance, flooded with awe, was converted from skeptic to apologist.

IN retrospect, it becomes evident how much common sense had to be sacrificed in the service of this conversion. One notices now, for instance, that Nance's report of a "lack of serious health problems" among the Tasaday is belied in his book by accounts of disease. And recently it has been said once again that the whole story of the discovery of the Tasaday may be fraudulent. Yet the wish to believe remains as strong as ever. Thus, when the New York *Times,* breaking a month-long silence, finally carried a report of the new charges of fraud, it restricted itself to the information that recent visitors, the first in ten years, had found the Tasaday wearing clothing and in possession of manufactured tools and other objects. "In interviews," the *Times* went on,

> two anthropologists who recently revisited the tribe said these new possessions, which had aroused the skepticism of Swiss and German reporters who saw them recently, were an expectable product of the tribe's first contacts with outsiders in the early 1970's.

But why, if the Tasaday had come into extended contact with civilization in the early 1970's, should the Germans and Swiss have been surprised at the clothing? The answer, though one would not have learned it from the *Times,* is that the Germans and Swiss were not surprised at all. Instead, they reported being told by the Tasaday that Elizalde had "forced us to live in the caves so we could be called cave men. Before then, we had worn clothing, even though it was rather torn." The *Times* not only omitted this information, which was available to it as a subscriber to the Reuters news service, but also failed to mention that the two anthropologists interviewed for its own story were members of the original Nance expedition and deeply committed to the Tasaday story.

The "discovery" of the Tasaday, whether or not a hoax, seemed tailor-made to buttress the new world picture; by contrast, the mere existence of the Ik seemed calculated to undermine it, and to redress the balance in favor of civilization. The Ik were studied by Colin Turnbull, a professional anthropologist whose book on them, *The Mountain People,* appeared in 1972. As against the Tasaday, the life in nature of this isolated and primitive African group was one of unexampled Hobbesian viciousness. The individual Ik, whether adult or child, foraged strictly for himself. The group had failed even to establish a sufficient degree of community to arrange for the disposal of human waste, and as a result it lived in the unrelieved stench of human feces. Children were barely tolerated by their parents, and then only

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until they were three, at which point they were expelled from their homes. "Men would watch a child with eager anticipation as it crawled toward the fire, then burst into gay and happy laughter as it plunged a skinny hand into the coals." Virtually universal among the Ik were adultery, deception, cruelty to others and to one another. Far from protecting one another, "anyone falling down was good for a laugh . . . particularly if he was old or weak, or blind."

The implications of such a people for the romanticized conception of the primitive would seem all too clear. Yet Turnbull himself defended the Ik—on theoretical grounds. He concluded that they had probably once held to higher values—and "very likely" with greater fidelity than Western civilized men—but had had to abandon them "for the very good reason that in their context these militated against survival." The "context" Turnbull refers to is the severely depleted region the Ik inhabited, which itself had degenerated "with the advent of civilization to Africa." In other words, the conditions that produced the Ik were "a part of that phenomenon we so blandly and unthinkingly refer to as progress."

Turnbull goes even farther, arguing that the Ik, "if we are honest," are not "greatly different from ourselves in terms of behavior." After all, starting with our kindergartens, and "reaching on through school and summer camps," we "effectively divorce" ourselves from our children. In fact, "there is not all that much difference" between us and the *animals*. "Technologically," Turnbull grants, "we are superior in some respects," but of course our technology is evil. And if it is true that we can speak—or as Turnbull grudgingly phrases it, if "we do seem to have developed the art of verbal communication to a point that gives us an enormous potential advantage over other animals"—here too "it can readily be shown that both speech and writing, misused, have led to many of the disasters peculiar to humanity." Much, indeed, can be readily shown, especially when the contemporary world picture is threatened as radically as it is by the horrors of the Ik.

Not surprisingly, Turnbull later was one of those who sprang to the defense of Margaret Mead when the methods and conclusions of her famous 1928 book, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, were challenged in 1983 by the Australian anthropologist Derek Freeman. Mead, it will be recalled, had depicted a Tasaday-like society which, thanks to unrepressed sexuality during adolescence, was virtually immune from such ills of modernity as rape and suicide. On the basis of his own investigations Freeman found to the contrary that the Samoans were not sexually unrepressed during adolescence but placed a high value on female virginity. Using court records and other evidence, he also showed that Samoan society displayed greater amounts of hostility than Western society, and had higher rather than lower rates of both suicide and rape. Turnbull, in his defense of Mead, avoided the scientific issue and instead praised Mead for her bravery and personal sacrifice—and her admirable criticisms of Western civilization.

An analogous defense has been mounted on behalf of those who, by attempting to teach sign language to primates, have challenged man on the grounds of his verbal uniqueness. In *Nim*, an account of one such attempt, Herbert Terrace writes that "until recently, humans could take comfort in the assurance that our language made us unique." Setting out to challenge that assurance, Terrace trained a chimpanzee named Nim for two years, teaching it to recognize numerous signs as well as to signal its wants.

As Terrace sat down to review his written and videotaped records, he had reason to believe that he had achieved a breakthrough. To his dismay, however, he discovered that neither Nim nor any other trained primate had used combinations of signs in genuinely sentence-like ways. Terrace came to this conclusion "reluctantly," and no wonder, given the hopes with which he had begun. Nevertheless, his was a rare victory for scientific objectivity.

The responses to that victory are another matter. The well-known science writer Martin Gardner, who accepts Terrace's conclusions, has pointed out that the desires of researchers have colored experiments to such a degree that an animal's failure to talk is often explained away as a joke or a lie. He cites Francine Patterson on Koko (made famous in the film documentary, *Koko, A Talking Gorilla*):

> She asks Koko to sign drink. Koko touches her ear. Koko is joking. She asks Koko to put a toy under a bag. Koko raises it to the ceiling. Koko is teasing. She asks Koko what rhymes with sweet. Koko makes the sign for red, a gesture similar to the one for sweet. Koko is making a gestural pun. She asks Koko to smile. Koko frowns. Koko is displaying a "grasp of opposites." Penny [Francine Patterson] points to a photograph of Koko and asks, "Who gorilla?" Koko signs "Bird." Koko is being "bratty."

Though Gardner could not be more unequivocal in dismissing talking-animal claims, he himself, it is worth noting, declares a certain uneasiness at being put thereby in the company of the likes of Mortimer J. Adler (*The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes*). Still, Gardner's uneasiness is mild compared with that of others, including Terrace's publisher. As Gardner observes, "nowhere on the jacket of *Nim* or in the book's advertising does the publisher so much as hint that the book severely criticizes practically all earlier work with talking apes." The publisher's silence was well calculated; in the event, one lone researcher has accepted Terrace's conclusions.

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Today, Ursula LeGuin remains positively outraged at the "bad faith" of those who deny animal speech. She attributes their position to "speciesism," to "a need to believe in the unquestionability of human uniqueness, human supremacy." (Actually, the proclivities of Terrace and other critics lie exactly in the opposite direction.) Miss LeGuin holds in favor of animal speech despite several bizarre revelations that she herself recounts of eccentric, erratic behavior on the part of ape researchers. For example, Francine Patterson now keeps Koko "jealously and zealously guarded," and her results "have been so selectively released that even the most sympathetic scientists have trouble defending Miss Patterson's work." Another animal and its trainer "are keeping a low profile in the Pacific Northwest." Finally, almost unbelievably,

> Janis Carter, who worked in language experiments with the chimpanzee Lucy (raised as a "baby" by a couple who gave her to the training center), took her to an island in an African river, where the woman must live in a cage while two groups of chimpanzees roam free. Trying to free Lucy of her human dependence, Miss Carter will not use sign language with her.

Similar contortions in the service of the theory that animals are at least the equals if not the superiors of man have been undergone by Jane Goodall, the lady who lived "Among the Wild Chimps," as a *National Geographic* TV special had it. Goodall spent most of the years between 1960 and 1984 in close proximity to chimpanzees in the wild. She has concluded that they share essential traits with humans, including altruistic behavior, and in addition they possess a number of admirable and endearing qualities of their own. After fourteen years of study, however, Goodall observed something never before suspected of chimpanzees: they had begun to murder and devour their own kind. A mother and daughter became adept at seizing and eating the infants of other chimpanzees. There was no question of a food shortage, or of any resentment at work.

Goodall could offer no explanation for this unanticipated behavior—though a conclusion never mentioned by her or those reporting on her work is one that would have instantly sprung to the minds of scientists and amateurs alike in any period preceding our own, namely, that animals in their way, just as primitive peoples in theirs, exhibit behavior that is considered brutal by civilized norms. But to concede this would be tantamount to conceding the superiority of civilized man, an obvious impossibility. To anyone still foolish enough to hold such an idea, the usual retort is to point triumphantly to acts of torture, infanticide, cannibalism, and genocide committed by civilized societies themselves (while ignoring the fact that such violations of civilized norms have always been condemned as aberrations by the civilized world at large).

To remind us of our place in the scheme of things, the curators of the Bronx Zoological Garden in New York have thoughtfully positioned a mirror for visitors to the Great Ape House. Above the mirror is the legend, "The Most Dangerous Animal in the World." Under it is written:

> This animal, increasing at the rate of 190,000 every 24 hours, is the only creature that has killed off entire species of other animals. Now it has achieved the power to wipe out all life on earth.

The curators, one understands, do not have in mind the American Indians—who joined civilized men in hunting the ivory-billed woodpecker until the bird was extinct on the North American continent. Nor are they thinking of the Maori, a South Pacific people who hunted the six-foot-tall land bird, the Moa, to extinction in New Zealand. No, the "animal" being referred to is the one from whose ranks came those volunteers in California who recently took turns supporting beached whales in their arms to enable them to breathe, not to mention the marchers in the 1984 All-Species parade in San Francisco who costumed themselves as crustaceans, birds, and trees to express their solidarity with forms of life ordinarily looked down on by man.

Most writers on these subjects are so committed to the relativist view that they routinely put quotation marks around the key terms of the discussion, "civilization" and "primitivism." These indicate that the writer rejects any tendency to elevate the one or to fail in appreciation of the other. "Cannibalism," too, regularly appears in quotation marks, both to indicate skepticism that it is as widespread as claimed and to allude to the view that "civilization" brings harms as great as or greater than primitivism. A note of irony often hovers about such quotation marks, as when Colin Turnbull distinguishes between " 'advanced' " societies, which show signs of violent collapse, and " 'backward' " societies, to which "this new violence has not yet come." Similarly, when he writes that the Ik have " 'progressed' " to their present condition, he really implies that they have been the casualties of modern progress.

The vocal equivalent of such quotation marks can be heard in the tones of narration employed in television documentaries about animals and primitive peoples. The title of one of these, "Testament to the Bushmen," may stand for all, with their invariable presumption of a widespread and deplorable tendency toward feelings of civilized human superiority. His voice dripping with sanctimony, the narrator at once gently castigates the audience and renders homage to the rare, underappreciated values to be found among the peoples and species who have been photographed.

Interestingly enough, however, what we see on the screen is often a picture of destitution, dis-

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ease, or blank despair. As a narrator intones the virtues of Masai tribal life, for example, the camera may be revealing naked children covered with sores and beset by cattle flies so persistent that the children have ceased to pay attention as they crawl over their open eyes. Or the Maori will be extolled for their devotion to art and respect for nature while the camera roams over ancient carvings depicting a people living in fortified villages and constantly at war.

In a film about Nigeria, a solemn respect is accorded to "traditional healers," long spurned by "orthodox [Western] medicine"; it is wrong, we are told, to think that "one is better than another," when what is needed between the two is "mutual respect." Without irony, the camera shows a traditional bone setter, who helps heal his patient by breaking a cock's leg; when the cock heals, the patient's leg will heal as well. With the mentally disturbed, we are informed, the native way in Nigeria is to keep them in village surroundings rather than exiling them to the indifferent confines of institutions. In the village, they are cared for by a traditional healer, who uses incantations and herbal concoctions. The camera now takes the viewer to the dirt area behind the healer's hut. Here sit approximately a dozen mental sufferers in a line (the camera shoots only in close-up, making it impossible to view conditions in the dirt enclosure or to see how many are held in it). Some of them are shackled, some drugged; all straddle a ditch; none moves.

At least one public-television documentary has taken an anthropological look at modern man using images compiled from a year of photographing at and near a single, busy corner in Manhattan. People are shown crossing the street, often hurrying. Some are abstracted, few are animated. In one sequence, the corner is viewed from a rooftop high above, so that the people resemble insects in a hive. The camera lingers over those passers-by who seem upset, disoriented, even frantic. The narration? Modern man is lonely, unhappy. He lacks a sense of community, suffers from anomie. Not revealed is that the disturbed faces are those of released mental patients who mingle with the crowds in this particular neighborhood. When it comes to civilization, the accepting, embracing eye—the eye that looks benignly on the disposition of the mentally ill in Nigeria—turns suddenly censorious and judgmental.

This is not to say that there are no discriminations to be made *within* Western civilization; the new world picture has as many gradations as any previous world picture. But once the principle of reversal is understood, it is easy to arrive at the contemporary view on any number of matters. Simply elevate students with low grades and poor test scores, for example, over high achievers (the former are talented, the latter unimaginative). Find virtue in the criminal, stodginess in the law-abiding citizen. For the highest accolades, move quickly to what used to be thought of as the bottom of society: children and the insane.

Better yet, find a Caliban. In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the wise magician Prospero is accorded sway over the lower creatures and the lower mortal Caliban—or so the play has always been understood. As Richard Levin has shown, however, contemporary literary criticism has systematically turned the meaning of this play upside down. The first step was to argue that Shakespeare actually intended Prospero to be "equated" with Caliban in evil. Next, Caliban himself began to be viewed favorably. By the 1980's he "represented any group that felt itself oppressed." In one production of the play in New York, "he appeared as a punk rocker, complete with cropped hair, sunglasses, and Cockney accent." A feminist critic has imagined a soliloquy for Prospero's daughter, Miranda, whom Caliban once tried to rape, in which she concludes, "I need to join forces with Caliban."

In the Elizabethan world picture, man was constantly admonished to remember that his place was both high and low in the scale of things: above the animals but below the angels, possessed of reason but subject to the passions. "What a piece of work is a man!" Hamlet exclaims, but in the same speech calls him "this quintessence of dust." And Prospero himself, as Tillyard points out, calls Caliban "this thing of darkness . . . mine," as a reminder that his limitation as a human being is to be linked forever with the bestial. That this link should become a point of pride, that Caliban should be apotheosized rather than seen as a cautionary example—this is a development that could hardly have been predicted.

In the 1980's signs typical of a disintegrating world picture have appeared. Those clinging to the still-dominant, low view of man increasingly have resort to the unverifiable to sustain their case, positing eons-old explosions in space, fanciful interpretations of prehistoric hieroglyphs, putatively destroyed documents, conjectures about the mind processes of inarticulate primates. When their slenderly supported metaphysical constructs are refuted, they respond with recriminations against the bearers of bad tidings. Still, some, like Herbert Terrace, have found that their first allegiance is to the scientific method, and in this there is hope. It now remains, just as it did, *mutatis mutandis*, at the time of the breakup of the Elizabethan world picture, for the implications of evidence favorable to man to be assimilated. The contemporary world awaits its John Donne: a poet capable of abandoning the comfort of stones in favor of the rigors of self-respect.

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A Case of Academic Freedom

Joseph Epstein

My office in the English department at Northwestern University is in University Hall, an American gothic joke of a building whose architect might have been inspired by Charles Addams, if the building weren't much older than the cartoonist. Yet I have grown enamored of this absurd pile of limestone, where for the past twelve years I have had an office and done most of my teaching. Located on the second floor, my office overlooks what is known on campus as "the rock." The rock is a boulder, roughly seven feet high, perhaps six feet in diameter, and a marker and meeting place for undergraduates. Fraternity and sorority pledge classes regularly paint the rock, students set up tables near it to sell T-shirts or yearbooks or campus magazines or to collect for charities. From ten minutes before the hour until the hour is struck, there is fairly heavy traffic near the rock, with students passing on their way to classes or back to their apartments, dormitories, fraternities, and sororities.

Fancying myself old Mr. Chips(tein), sometimes I stand at the window of my office and gaze down upon the students as they congregate around the rock or on the steps of University Hall. I note especially students who have been in my classes, many of whose names, only a year or two later, I have quite forgotten or will soon forget. As I watch them pass, I wonder what plots life has in store for the two upper-middle-class girls from a suburb outside Minneapolis who are in Ralph Lauren duds, or for the punkily dressed theater major who was such an atrocious speller, or for the Chinese pre-med student who did so well in my course in advanced prose composition. I wonder, too, about the future of the students who are members of the campus political organization that is known as InCAR (standing for International Committee Against Racism), who frequent the purlieus of the rock perhaps more than anyone else and are always there on heavy political business: to collect funds for striking coal miners in the north of England, to aid the guerrillas in El Salvador, to crush the guerrillas in Nicaragua, to beseech the university to divest from South Africa, to halt a showing of the film *Birth of a Nation*, and more, always much more. Like the village idiot hired by the *shtetl* in which he lived to await by the village gates the coming of the messiah, the students of InCAR appear never to be out of work.

No one would ever accuse the InCAR kids of having flair. Say what you like against the 60's —and I would say a very great deal against them —the students who took part in the tumult of those years at least appeared hugely to enjoy the Dionysian fringe benefits that went along with their ostensibly Apollonian goals. The pleasure of the 60's, after all, was in doing exactly what one pleased while appearing at the same time to be doing good. This alluring combination has left many students of the current generation with what I think of as "60's envy," or regret at missing a whacking idealistic good time. But the students in InCAR in no way suggest those of the 60's. In their regression they jump all the way back to the 1930's, without the excuse of not knowing for certain what Stalin was doing in Russia during those years.

The students who belong to InCAR manage to achieve a grayness, a grimness, a joylessness that almost seems studied. There is a dimness about their dress, a bleakness about their response to the pleasant surroundings in which they live— Northwestern's is a lush campus set along the shore of Lake Michigan in Evanston, Illinois— that does not seem altogether natural. Whatever the season, winter seems to be in their faces as they stand near the rock, blaring the word through bullhorns or passing out leaflets for one or another of their causes—leaflets written in a tone and style that resemble not so much political argument as a ransom note. A local joke on campus asks, "How many members of InCAR does it take to change a light bulb?" "None," the answer is, "They don't change it—they smash it."

For the students who have joined it—and, undergraduate and graduate students together, they appear to number fewer than thirty—InCAR obviously gives something of the pleasure in collectivity that a fraternity or sorority provides, though much intensified. Among other pleasures, it gives that of being in total and permanent opposition on a campus whose student body is otherwise middle and upper-middle class in tone and feeling. Unlike a fraternity or sorority, InCAR gives its members a complete outlook on

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life: a way of understanding the world and a language to help explain it. There is also the sense of a "movement," for InCAR is not restricted to Northwestern University but claims an international membership in the thousands, ranging, or so it says, from coal miners in Kent in England to farm workers in the San Joaquin Valley in California. It is an offshoot—the impolite word is "front"—of the Communist Progressive Labor party, which has been in existence for fifteen years.

But only in the past five or so years has InCAR been a felt presence at Northwestern. A few of its members have wandered into my classes during this time. They tend to be very earnest, rather more passionate than the general run of Northwestern student, sometimes bright but never brilliant. The passion and the brightness, when they exist, come from the infusions of ideology that InCAR has given them. But what they gain on the straightaway they lose on the curve: that same ideology makes InCAR students leaden and mechanistic in their response to literature and ideas. They have minds so coarse no feelings can violate them. They have no notion that what seem to them hot new ideas are clichés pickled in the brine and blood of more than five decades. They write classroom papers with titles like "Sister Carrie as a Commodity" and "Joseph Conrad, Counter-Revolutionary." They will respond to a point made by a classmate by accusing him of being "imprisoned in bourgeois ideology," using the phrase as if it were quite as fresh and penetrating as an aphorism discovered in the middle of Proust.

The rise if not to prominence then at least to high visibility for InCAR came with the arrival at Northwestern of an assistant professor in the English department named Barbara Foley. The daughter of a Columbia professor, raised in the affluent Riverdale section of New York, Barbara Foley had gone to Radcliffe and then for a Ph.D. to the University of Chicago; she had taught previously at the University of Wisconsin; she is married and has two children. Somewhere along the line she was radicalized, and now, in her late thirties, she makes no bones about her politics: "Leninist" is for her an honorific term. Was it Barbara Foley that a student, in a course of mine on the sociology of literature, had in mind when, in a paper on the subject of the adversary culture, she wrote:

> As a writing major at NU, last year I took a course in American poetry which was taught by a certain Prof. X who claimed that Whitman was inherently racist and sexist in his naive representation of democracy, William Carlos Williams was racist in his depiction of individuals content within their socioeconomic positions, and that Dickinson, Frost, and other later New England writers were guilty of adhering to an ultimately "bourgeois" attitude of individualism combined with some sort of belief in religion, an after-life, and a sense of higher purpose: a belief which X considered "the opiate of the masses. . . ." X's message to aspiring writers was implicit; as writers, our goal should be to search out and criticize each and every fault in our culture. Any desire to affirm any aspect of that culture, we should stifle with our "critical intellects."

Although these views would seem to be congruent with Prof. Foley's, I cannot be certain that she is Prof. X, for there have been other professors in the English department in which I teach who might also be pleased to claim the same views. I do not say that such views are dominant at Northwestern, or in the American university at large, but they do nowadays crop up with a fair frequency, and not in English departments alone. I recall three years ago taking two young men, graduating seniors who had been through two of my courses, to lunch, in the middle of which they unfurled a number of straightforwardly Marxist notions about American foreign policy. "Do you guys show slides with these clichés?" I inquired. I also asked where they had acquired such views. It turned out that they had just completed a course in American diplomatic history whose bottom, middle, top, and every other line was that all American foreign policy was a cover for the imperialist ventures of American business interests abroad. These were bright fellows, each of them with a fine sense of humor; one was headed for a career in journalism, the other for the foreign service; and I was disheartened to think that, as they were leaving my university, they were lugging such crude notions along with them.

A difference that never fails to astonish me between undergraduate education now and then —"then" being roughly thirty years ago, when I was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago—is that now university teachers who have strong political views feel no need to suppress them in the name of fairness or disinterestedness or a higher allegiance to the subject being taught. I may have been a political näif when young, but thinking back upon my own undergraduate education I cannot recall the political opinions of any of my teachers. The reason I cannot, I suspect, is that they kept their politics to themselves. Their politics were nobody's business but their own, and, while they were in the classroom or lecture hall, not even their own.

Academic freedom, which earlier generations of professors had struggled to obtain, was about the right to hold any political views one wished outside the classroom. One of the most common meanings of academic freedom, in the words of Edward Shils, "refers to the freedom of university —and college—teachers to enjoy the freedom of speech and action that other citizens are constitutionally, legally, and conventionally empowered to exercise." But that meaning has in recent

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decades been extended to include the right to teach one's political views as part of the subject matter of one's courses. Not only is it considered a right, but, in many quarters, it is thought a fine thing. Thus university academic departments nowadays seek out feminists, Marxists, and others in whom the political impulse runs stronger than any other, to *teach their bias*—and to do so in the name of intellectual diversity. If a strong English-department chairman were today to learn about the teaching of Prof. X, quoted above, and tried to tell him or her to knock it off in the name of a higher seriousness, that chairman would no doubt be accused of interfering with Prof. X's academic freedom.

In the old days one can imagine a strong English-department chairman, in the approved English-professor manner, taking Prof. X aside to say, "Look here, X, do be a good fellow and forget that rot about the bourgeois attitudes of the New England writers I understand you are teaching. Publish it if you like—that is your business. But our business, as teachers, is sticking to the text." If Prof. X were tenured, the request would be a friendly one; if he were not yet tenured, the request would no doubt be more insistent. Today, however, our chairman would be accused, at a minimum, of McCarthyism, fascism, and troglodyticism. The American Association of University Professors might be called in. An article might appear in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Litigation might be set in motion. But, not to worry, no chairman is likely to suggest that Prof. X knock it off. It just isn't done.

It isn't done—not at least at large universities mindful of their prestige—because a college teacher's classroom has become his castle, and he is free to do there as he pleases. Colleagues do not make judgments about a fellow teacher's teaching. Instead, under the new dispensation, students do. Students always have done so, of course, but whereas earlier they did so informally, now, through something called evaluation forms, they do so formally. On the final days of a class, with perhaps ten or twenty minutes remaining, a professor passes out evaluation forms on which students remark on the strengths and deficiencies of his course. In cases where a professor is coming up for tenure, these evaluations are considered by his colleagues with some care. Tenured faculty, in these instances, do not directly judge the teacher; they judge the students' judgments, which is not quite the same thing.

Not that judging teaching is easy. As everyone who has been to college knows, a popular teacher can be inefficient and a dull teacher can sometimes leave a lasting impress. What seems exciting in one's youth, ten years later seems facile, if not silly. Teaching, especially teaching the large, so-called soft subjects in the humanities, where mastery of specific problems is not the chief business at hand, but asking the right questions is, is a subtle art. Student evaluations of one's own teaching do not help. These evaluations can capture real delinquency, citing a professor's many absences or his obvious unpreparedness. But beyond that, in the realm where useful distinctions might be made, they leave everything to be desired. Evaluations of my own teaching tend to be quite positive, and my teaching is almost always held to be—most ambiguous of words—"interesting." But how much gets through, how long it will remain, I haven't the least idea, and my guess is that neither does any other teacher. The most touching student evaluation I have ever received noted: "I did well in his course because I would have been ashamed not to do well for him." But of the content of what I teach, and of the quality of thought that goes into this content—nothing. Undergraduate students can hardly be expected to be fit to judge this, and by and large they do not.

Barbara Foley, too, is thought to be an "interesting" teacher, some say an "exciting" teacher, some say the best teacher they have had at Northwestern. A small percentage of students—perhaps 10 percent—say that they are put off by what they term her "ideology." About this ideology she is apparently, as they say today, "up front." She makes clear her political point of view and then teaches it. A bit of a Jenny One-Note, Prof. Foley teaches courses that feature the political; their titles have included "Race and Racial Attitudes in American Literature," "The Radical Tradition in American Literature," "Proletarian Writers of the 1930's," and "The American Dream: Myth or Reality?" (anyone out there who cares to bet that the dream is a reality, please get in touch with me immediately). These courses, I have gathered from talking to students who have taken them and have since graduated, offer strong Marxistical readings of American books, with occasional eye-opening insights such as that, one of my former students recalls, Mark Twain was a "liberal racist." You don't have to believe Prof. Foley, you don't have to swallow her line to do well in her courses, but it is, evidently, no easy chore to buck her directly. Still, the vast majority of her students, according to student evaluations, walk away satisfied customers.

In the scuttlebutt way one picks up on these things, one hears occasional murmurs of reaction against the heavy dosage of politics in Prof. Foley's political teaching. A student who adored Emily Dickinson was greatly unsettled by Prof. Foley's announcement that Emily Dickinson had rendered herself permanently minor by ignoring the political subject in her work. In another case, a young black student, who had been in two of my courses, dropped in one morning to ask if I thought that he, an undergraduate, was intellectually prepared to take a graduate-level course taught by Barbara Foley. I replied that I thought if he took special pains he was indeed up to it. "There's only one

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thing I worry about, then," he said. When I asked what that was, he replied, "The word is out that Prof. Foley gives almost all black students A's. I really wouldn't want to get an A that way." Was this true? Was Barbara Foley practicing in her own classroom the redistributive justice she longed for in the world? Short of checking all her students' grades for the six years she has taught at Northwestern, there is no way of knowing. It is interesting, though, that this is the word among black students.

Something that no one in the English department at Northwestern has had the ill manners to talk about is whether Prof. Foley uses her classroom to recruit members for InCAR. In a brief profile in the *Daily Northwestern* of an undergraduate InCAR member named Becki Huntman, the walls of whose rooms are festooned with pictures of Lenin, Stalin, Malcolm X, and Friedrich Engels, Miss Huntman is quoted as saying that she first learned of InCAR and Communist ideology during her sophomore year in a "Marxism in Literature" course taught by Prof. Foley. "It was the first class," Miss Huntman added, "where things made sense." I asked a former student of mine, who had taken one of Barbara Foley's courses, if the subject of InCAR ever came up in class. She replied that sometimes, toward the close of a class, Prof. Foley would pass out an announcement of an InCAR meeting, where, she would say, some of the things that had been discussed in class would be talked about in greater detail. Often, too, my former student said, InCAR members would be waiting at the beginning of a class outside the door with petitions to sign or leaflets to hand out. Once, when my former student called on Prof. Foley to discuss a forthcoming classroom paper, she found her extremely helpful, but on the way out Prof. Foley attempted to sell her the current issue of the Progressive Labor party newspaper. "Did you buy it?" I asked. "No," she said. "Was Prof. Foley angry that you didn't?" "Not at all," she said. "I guess she figured it was worth a try."

Something else that no one at Northwestern talks about is Barbara Foley's exact relationship with InCAR. The group is made up of students, but she is a professor. During the student tumult of the late 60's and early 70's there was many a professor who was in entire sympathy with groups such as Students for a Democratic Society, but were there any professors, above the level of graduate-student instructors, who were also members of student organizations? Such groups have generally had faculty advisers, but Prof. Foley's role in InCAR goes far beyond the advisory. If there is an InCAR picket, she is on the line; she puts in her time with the bullhorn; she works the rock. There is nothing of the standard dilettante, BMW-owning, Marxoid, let-the-kids-do-all-the-dirty-work contemporary radical university professor about Barbara Foley. The movement is neither an amusement nor an avocation for her. It is of her blood and bone; she is wedded to it; it is her life. Not many people at Northwestern seem to want to talk about this, either.

In fact, Barbara Foley probably would never have been a subject of more than ordinary interest—her type, after all, is scarcely original—but for an incident that took place on the Northwestern campus on the evening of April 13, 1985, an incident that has come to be known locally as the Calero Event. On that night Adolfo Calero, then the commander-in-chief of the Nicaraguan Democratic Forces (FDN), the largest group of *contras*, as the guerrillas fighting against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua are known, was to speak at Northwestern under the auspices of two university organizations, the Conservative Council and the International Policy Forum. The Reagan administration's campaign to increase American support for the *contras* was already well under way, and one assumes that Adolfo Calero was to speak at Northwestern, as he would at other universities, to make the case for this policy.

One has to assume this, for in fact Calero never got to speak. His talk was scheduled for 7:00 P.M. and was open to the university community and to the public free of charge. Well before the talk, however, protesters from at least five different left-wing organizations—four from around the city of Chicago and InCAR from Northwestern—ranged themselves around Harris Hall, the place of the scheduled talk, some carrying pickets and shouting and chanting against Calero and the *contras*. In the room in Harris Hall in which the Calero talk was to be given—a room that accommodates roughly 300 people—some ten or fifteen minutes before Adolfo Calero was to appear, Barbara Foley walked up to the podium and began to speak. (The day before, she had discussed the forthcoming Calero talk in her English class and urged her students to attend.) She identified herself as a member of the International Committee Against Racism, and then announced, in the words of an ad-hoc panel document,* that "this was the first fascist rally on campus in some time, she suspected more were being planned and they should be stopped." She said that "Adolfo Calero was a monster who would be attempting to speak about freedom, democracy, and liberty. By that he meant the right to reappropriate his Nicaraguan business holdings"; that "Calero had the blood of thousands on his hands and no respect for the rights to life and free speech of the people he helped slaughter with the CIA's

* I was not at Harris Hall on the night of April 13. My account of the events of that evening derives solely from a document entitled "Decision, Ad Hoc Panel of UFRPTDAP, Northwestern University, In the Matter of Professor Barbara Foley." Both Prof. Foley's lawyer and the lawyer for the provost of Northwestern agreed to and signed a "Stipulation of Facts" about that evening. It is from the ad-hoc panel's presentation of those agreed-upon facts that I have drawn.

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help"; that "He had no right to speak that night" and—the following are Prof. Foley's words—"We are not going to let him speak," and he "should feel lucky to get out of [Harris Hall] alive." She went on in this vein for two or three minutes. Other people followed her to the podium to offer their opinions.

When Adolfo Calero arrived there was a great deal of chanting and shouting in opposition to his presence. His talk was delayed some ten or fifteen minutes. Before he could begin someone—not Barbara Foley—rushed to the stage and threw a red liquid at him. This liquid had been variously described as paint and as animal blood. At this point, with a good deal of shouting in the hall, Adolfo Calero, his suit coat bespattered with the red liquid, was led from the hall by security men and did not speak that evening. Barbara Foley acknowledges joining in the chanting during the tumult. A witness claims that she also shouted that "the only way to get anything done would be to kill him [Calero]," though she and another witness, a graduate student who is also a member of InCAR, deny that she said this. In any case, what is apparently technically known as "a shout-down"—though the throwing of the red liquid went well beyond shouting—was successful. It was not a memorable night for "dialogue" at Northwestern University.

The Calero Event took place on a Saturday evening. The following Monday a photograph of the bespattered Adolfo Calero along with an account of the incidents surrounding the event appeared in the *Daily Northwestern*. The account quoted Barbara Foley as having said, "He has no right to speak here tonight and we are not going to let him. He should feel lucky to get out alive." (This quotation would come up again and again.) The account also mentioned that protesters later gathered outside the apartment at which Calero was staying, threatening violence, and had to be removed by police. Prof. Foley claimed that InCAR was not responsible for what had happened but that she did not regret that it happened. (She would never express regret, let alone offer apology, throughout the months that followed; nor has she done so since. But more about this presently.) She was also quoted as saying, "I think it's terrific that people saw the fascists."

Soon thereafter Arnold Weber, in his first year as president of Northwestern University, issued a strong but quite general statement about the impermissibility of any person or group invading the rights of students or faculty by disrupting regularly scheduled university events. Weber had previously been president of the University of Colorado and still earlier had worked for George Shultz at the Office of Management and Budget, but, apart from having a reputation as a strong and capable administrator, his general views or politics were not known. But a stronger and more specific statement came from the university provost, a man named W. Raymond Mack, a sociologist by training and, by all accounts, a liberal in politics. As a liberal should, Mack was said to be outraged by this violation of free speech and academic freedom, and, by way of a press release, he let it be known that he intended to propose that Barbara Foley be suspended for two academic quarters, and suspended without pay. Provost Mack also felt that the tenure procedure on Prof. Foley, which was to begin the following autumn, ought to be delayed for a full year.

Like Provost Mack, the majority of the faculty at Northwestern's College of Arts and Sciences are also generally liberal in their political views, with a sprinkling of Marxists and conservatives popping up here and there in various departments. But if most members of the faculty were outraged by the incidents connected with the Calero Event, they managed to keep it to themselves. When the autumn 1985 term began, such organizing efforts as were in evidence were on behalf of Barbara Foley. InCAR was firing up the Xerox machine with handouts headed "Foley Tenure Case Shows Need to Shed Liberal Illusions," pointing out that Northwestern University was clearly going the way of Nazi Germany. A group of faculty members in the English department wrote a lecture to Provost Mack on the subject of "due process" that ran as a full-page ad in the *Daily Northwestern*, signed by more than eighty members of the faculty. One would hear a good deal about "due process" in the days ahead. Except from the InCAR students, one would not hear much more about fascism and Nazi Germany. Liberals at a place like Northwestern are not so crude; they prefer instead to talk about "McCarthyism." One would also hear a great many sentences that began, "Of course I find Barbara Foley's views abhorrent, but . . . ." But, yet, still, and however. "The sin of nearly all left-wingers from 1933 onward," wrote George Orwell, "is that they have wanted to be anti-fascist without being anti-totalitarian."

THE first real action on what by now had come to be called "The Foley Case" took place on November 15 and 16, 1985, before the ad-hoc panel of a university body with the impossible acronym of UFRPTDAP (standing for University Faculty Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Dismissal Appeals Panel). The panel of five members—made up of two professors of medicine, one professor of material science and engineering, and a chairwoman and another professor from the School of Speech—met to hear eleven charges lodged against Barbara Foley for her conduct on the night of the Calero Event. At Prof. Foley's insistence, the panel met in open session, which (in my view) may have been a strategic mistake for Barbara Foley. The hearing was held on a dim Friday afternoon in an auditorium at the Kellogg School of Management called the Coon Forum. Modern in design, drab in appearance, the room ascends none too gently from

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its blackboard and podium and along its ascension double desks are arrayed behind which are swivel chairs. I have heard lectures in the Coon Forum, but I should say that it provides a better setting for, perhaps, a cockfight. The ad-hoc panel sat at the front, the bottom-most point of the room, with Prof. Foley and her lawyer to its right and Provost Mack and his lawyer (both lawyers were women) and an associate provost to its left. Owing perhaps to its being a drizzly Friday afternoon, the crowd in attendance was sparse; perhaps we were sixty people in all—many fewer, in any case, than had come to hear or to shout down Adolfo Calero seven months earlier.

I found the ad-hoc panel impressive in its competence. As befits professors, its members had done their homework. Relevant documents had been exchanged between contending parties; the ground rules and procedures were clearly laid out. The chairwoman made plain that if there were any demonstrations or disruptions, she would clear the auditorium. The hearing was conducted with a certain gravity of spirit that was entirely appropriate to the business at hand. The business at hand was serious business—a young woman's career could ride on the outcome.

THE hearing proper began with Provost Mack reading his eleven charges against Prof. Foley. There is no need to list all eleven charges here. Suffice it to say that Barbara Foley was accused of disrupting a regularly scheduled university event by inciting the audience to a shout-down; that Prof. Foley did so willfully and premeditatedly, and thus contributed to an abridgment of freedom of speech and freedom of inquiry; that her behavior on that night constituted grave professional misconduct; and that this behavior violated principles of academic freedom and responsibility that are widely accepted and clearly expressed in statements issued by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

Before responding to the specific charges, Barbara Foley made a general opening statement. The political speech is a form with which she is at ease. To make a longish speech short, she said that subjecting her to these charges at all was farcical, and the charges showed that the administration at Northwestern University, in its accusations against her, was really aligned with the Reagan administration's policies in Central America. (I have to admit that this connection had not occurred to me.) After this statement, Barbara Foley's lawyer began calling witnesses. The first among them was a graduate student on whose dissertation committee Barbara Foley sat. A small and extremely tidy young woman, she shocked—at least she shocked me—with the quiet violence of her views. To her it was perfectly obvious that Adolfo Calero, being evil, had no right to speak, and she had no qualms either about the red liquid that was thrown at him. Others of Prof. Foley's students, graduate and undergraduate, agreed that Calero had been treated as he deserved and that shouting him down was a perfectly appropriate response to such a man. Allowing such witnesses to speak on Barbara Foley's behalf seemed to me a very foolish tack for her lawyer to take; the best defense can surely never be a bad offense.

As a university teacher, I am not sure I should wish to be judged by what my students thought they had learned from me. But in Barbara Foley's case, there was no question that her students had got it right; their views, at any rate, were perfectly congruent with her own on the subjects of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and political discussion: to those deemed enemies, none is permitted. While Prof. Foley was not being judged by the ad-hoc panel as a teacher, the sad show her students put on could not have helped her cause. The open hearing, too, made it impossible for Barbara Foley to express the least contrition for what she had done, assuming that she felt any or even wished to fake some. The best that could be got from her with her InCAR crowd in the audience was that—I am quoting again from the UFRPTDAP document cited earlier—"although she did not agree with a judgment that condemns her behavior, she would live within the limits prescribed and would not repeat the prescribed conduct. She acknowledged that were she to repeat it, she would do so knowingly and at full risk."

At the intermission of the first session of the ad-hoc panel hearing, I ran into a friend who is also a member of the English department at Northwestern. He looked very glum, not to say downright depressed. He told me that he was soon likely to lose the allegiance of some of his best graduate students, who were adamantly in Barbara Foley's camp. "After what I have just heard in that room," he said, referring to the ad-hoc panel proceedings, "there is no way I can ever hope to support Barbara." As things turned out, he, along with the majority of the faculty, would find a way.

It was not until January of 1986 that the UFRPTDAP ad-hoc panel delivered its report and recommendation on the Foley case. The report has a somewhat pompous tone, possibly owing to the panel members' repeated insistence on the scrupulosity of their procedures and bases for judgment. As for the judgment itself, it went crushingly against Barbara Foley, sustaining eight of the administration's eleven charges against her. I quote from the summary of the panel's findings on the charges:

> The ad-hoc panel finds that Professor Foley's conduct on the evening of April 13, 1985, was violative of the speaker's rights to speak and be heard and of the audience's right to hear, and consequently constitutes "grave professional misconduct" as charged. We believe that the conduct was violative of academic freedom, a widely accepted principle essential to the central purpose of a university. We believe that the charges

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sustained describe conduct which is inimical to an atmosphere of open inquiry, antithetical to the principles of free speech, and unacceptable in a university community.

If the judgment against Barbara Foley was severe, the sanctions imposed upon her were not. "Despite the severity of Professor Foley's offense," the report ended, "we have weighed carefully possible sanctions short of two quarters of suspension without pay. The penalty we recommend is a formal letter of reprimand, accompanied by a warning that a repetition of the offense is actionable up to the point of dismissal, and placed in the permanent file of Professor Foley." Although she must secretly have been relieved at the lightness of these sanctions, Barbara Foley was quoted in the university newspaper as saying, "I was very disappointed by the stand taken by the panel, which failed to chastise the administration for its attempt to railroad me. In fact, the panel endorsed the essence of the administration's political position." The administration, in the person of Provost Mack, accepted the panel's recommendation, saying that its findings helped clarify university policy. Barbara Foley rejoined by saying that the administration had no choice but to accept the panel's recommendation, for "To react otherwise would've placed them in an antagonistic relationship with the rest of the faculty." She also said that she feared that faculty members reviewing her tenure case would be adversely influenced by the incident and would not concentrate on her academic performance.

That Barbara Foley was up for tenure the same year in which she was in effect tried for violations of academic freedom was a circumstance not without its ironies—for tenure, at its inception, was meant to protect the academic freedom of university teachers. Far from being the job-security arrangement it has since become, tenure began as a means of ensuring the rights of professors or citizens outside the university. Thus a university teacher might vote or speak or even organize on behalf of, say, labor unions and, with tenure, need not fear the retaliation of anti-labor men on his school's board of trustees. Academic freedom also ensured that a teacher would be able to pursue lines of scholarly or scientific inquiry that his colleagues or even the community might think odd or heretical. But academic freedom always carried certain responsibilities. Most obviously, it never included the freedom to abrogate someone else's freedom. It never included the freedom to turn the classroom into a political pulpit or guerrilla theater. It never included using the job of teacher to propagandize for political or religious conversions. The guardians of academic freedom were to be, precisely, its beneficiaries, the professors themselves, who might be expected to guard it jealously, at least if they knew what was good for their own interests.

Nowadays tenure is awarded, traditionally, after a young professor has been at an institution for two three-year terms, and on three bases: scholarship, teaching, and academic citizenship. The emphases laid on teaching and scholarship can differ from institution to institution. At some smaller colleges a teacher's publishing record may be of negligible import next to his performance in the classroom. At larger universities, especially those concerned about their prestige as research institutions, no publication, or insufficient publication, means no tenure. Although one hears the phrase less frequently now than formerly, "publish or perish" is still very much the rule at most larger universities.

The third basis for tenure, academic citizenship, is one that always has to be considered but is only in exceptional cases emphasized. It is a judgment, at least in part, of character; it is also a judgment about willingness to conform to the rules, explicit and implicit, that govern institutions of higher learning. If a young teacher shows himself irresponsible in his committee assignments, if he misses classes owing to drunkenness, if he seduces his young students, if he shows no regard for the fundamental beliefs of the institution, he could, theoretically, be faulted on academic citizenship and hence denied tenure. (With tenure, it occurs to me to add, the same teacher could today do any of the things mentioned in the previous sentence and probably keep his job.) Owing either to the widened tolerance for human misbehavior or to the lapse in standards of deportment on the part of professors, the category of academic citizenship is invoked in tenure decisions only in exceptional cases. Would Barbara Foley's be such a case?

Although I have been teaching in the English department at Northwestern University since 1974, I continue to do so, largely by choice, without tenure. Since only members of the department who already have tenure are permitted to vote on tenure decisions, I did not attend the meeting at which the decision about Barbara Foley's tenure was made. On the other hand, had I been at that meeting, I should have been bound by confidentiality not to speak about it. What I know about this meeting, therefore, I know from things that have leaked out and from surmise. It quickly leaked out, for example, that the English department's vote was ten to five (with one member abstaining) in favor of recommending Prof. Foley for tenure. As such recommendations go, this was not a strong one; it is more usual for a candidate for tenure to get a unanimous recommendation, or one with only one or two votes of dissent.

It also transpired that, during the tenure vote, discussions of Prof. Foley's politics were ruled out of order. Whether she was pushing a clear and hard political line in her classes, whether it was appropriate for a member of the faculty to be a major figure in a radical student organization, whether the teaching of literature was a proper

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occasion for attacking what Prof. Foley deemed the rampant racism and brutalities of capitalism in American life—all this, apparently, was proscribed from discussion, lest politics be thought to determine a decision that ought to be made exclusively on grounds of scholarship and pedagogy. As for Prof. Foley's behavior during the Calero Event, this, too, was apparently ruled out of bounds for discussion.

If one is not permitted to talk about the politics of so thoroughly political a woman as Barbara Foley, and forbidden to talk not only about her political views but (much more important) about her on-campus political activities, not much is left to talk about. There were the students' evaluations of her teaching, and these, as mentioned earlier, were vastly approving. There was her scholarship, as a teacher's publishing record is now conventionally called, and here she had clearly published in sufficient quantity to guard against her perishing: along with a fairly thick sheaf of reviews and articles in academic journals, she had a book on the documentary novel about to appear from Cornell Univeristy Press. Was Prof. Foley's academic citizenship discussed? I do not know, though afterward, in defense of the English department's decision, its chairman would say that he knew no better citizen of the English department than Barbara Foley. By this he meant that she was a willing and helpful member of department committees, attended meetings and other departmental events, was reliable in performing intramural house- and record-keeping functions. There is no reason to doubt his word on this, but his remains an astonishingly narrow view of academic citizenship. The vote, to repeat, was ten to five in favor of recommending tenure.

To plunge a bit further into the forest of surmise, what was in the minds of the ten faculty members who voted in favor of recommending Barbara Foley for tenure? None is a Marxist, though some have been known to mutter the cliché that "Marxism remains an indispensable tool of literary analysis." (Odd that the best literary critics have, without much difficulty, been able to dispense with it.) Some may have felt themselves crippled by the ground rules of the discussion. Almost all of them have said to me, singly, at one time or another, that "I find Barbara's views abhorrent, but . . . still . . . yet . . . however. . . ." *But* some find her abhorrent views useful for giving students a wide diversity of opinion. *Still*, some like her personally and say that in private she can be a charming woman. *Yet* some feel they have no right to claim that their own views are superior to the next person's, though I have never encountered anyone who finds his own views abhorrent. *However*, some feel that to censure even views and actions they find abhorrent is to be guilty of, yes, McCarthyism.

It is, of course, also possible that many members of the Northwestern English department were greatly impressed by Prof. Foley's scholarship, so greatly impressed that denying tenure to so considerable a scholar would have seemed grievously wrong (especially since there are now members of the English department who were given tenure before they even published a book). "Scholarship, scholarship, scholarship," said the chairman of the English department on another occasion in defending his department's decision on tenure, "that is what wins tenure at a place like Northwestern."

I fear that "scholarship" has in academic circles become one of those words that no longer means what it once did; "research" is another. Where scholarship once stood for the kind of work done by people like E. H. Gombrich, Arnaldo Momigliano, and Frances A. Yates, it now merely means published work. In this rather less impressive conception of scholarship, Prof. Foley had committed her share, and I decided to have a closer look at it (which, I believe, is called "research").

Reading Prof. Foley's book, *Telling the Truth: The Theory and Practice of Documentary Fiction*,* I recalled that one of her graduate students, while defending her conduct during the Calero Event, remarked that she admired Prof. Foley's expertise in "social awareness literature" and added that Prof. Foley was at the forefront of "the theoretical debate that is shaping literature." There is something in what this graduate student said. In her book Prof. Foley sets out to demonstrate that she is very much *au courant* with the new literary theory but is not about to let it swamp the larger questions of social awareness that, when one gets right down to it, no one has posed with greater clarity, penetration, and wisdom than Karl Marx and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

Part of the difficulty with *Telling the Truth* is that one does not get right down to it very quickly. Its first 103 pages are given over to the new literary theory gradually becoming regnant in English graduate studies. Devotees of this theory will find many old friends cited in her pages: Foucault, Bakhtin, Derrida, Barthes, Lacan. The reliable Marxist gang is also there: Christopher Caudwell, Lucien Goldmann, Georg Lukács, and Louis Althusser. When either Marx or Lenin is quoted, he is given scriptural authority. The highest new jargonese is everywhere employed. The prose is consequently very dense. Few actual works of literature are cited in this first part of the book. Instead something called "the text" is continually mentioned; also such barbed-wire words as "intertextuality" and "extratextuality." Nonprofessionals will find it all very hard, almost impenetrable, going. Reading the first part of Prof. Foley's book I was reminded of Robert Frost's remark that writing free verse is like playing tennis with the net down; perhaps

* Cornell University Press, 273 pp., $24.95.

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the best way to describe the new critical theory is to say that it is like playing ping-pong without the ball.

But the real purpose of the dense theoretical discussion of the first part of *Telling the Truth* is to make the point that the new literary theory cannot finally supplant that old indispensable tool of literary analysis, standard Marxism. In the second part of her book Prof. Foley puts a ball in play and discusses actual works in the genre she rather loosely defines as the documentary novel. "Contextualization," "hypostatization," "reconcretization of the referent," "fictionality"—the lyrics may be different but the melody is the traditional Marxist one. For, as long as we are telling the truth, the only documentary fiction Prof. Foley appears to approve is that which confronts the class struggle and the alienation she believes is the inevitable result of capitalism as part of an "oppositional program." Or, to put it in the not uncharacteristic prose style of *Telling the Truth*: "Though some writers manage to make use of modernist defamiliarization as a powerful tool in the critique of reification, most accede to the thoroughgoing fetishization of social relations that characterizes what Lukács called the 'problem of commodities' in the early 20th century."

THAT, patently, is not entertainment, but is it scholarship? Evidently, to judge by English-studies standards of the day, and by the subsequent career of Prof. Foley's tenure recommendation, it is indeed. Once such a recommendation leaves an academic department, its approval is far from certain. Not many years back the recommendation for tenure of an extremely popular teacher of philosophy was shot down at the level of the dean's office, presumably because the teacher's published work was felt by the dean not to have enough intellectual weight. But the recommendation for Prof. Foley sailed on through—from the university's ad-hoc tenure committee, thence to the College of Arts and Sciences Promotion and Tenure Committee, and thence to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences—everywhere endorsed, and reputed to have been strongly endorsed. It was reported that where usually somewhere between eight and twelve outside readers are called in for judgment upon a tenure decision, in Prof. Foley's instance there were between thirty-five and thirty-eight outside readers, and these endorsed her tenure overwhelmingly (a fact that by itself says a great deal about the fallen standards of English studies in recent years). Case, one would have thought, closed.

Not quite, as it turned out. On May 21, 1986, Barbara Foley received a letter from the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences whose first sentence read: "I must inform you that the Provost did not approve the recommendation to promote you to the rank of associate professor with tenure." The brief letter went on to say that she would be given a final year of employment as an assistant professor. Attached was a copy of Provost W. Raymond Mack's letter rejecting the appointment. In his letter the provost cited the fact that Prof. Foley "failed to receive a majority vote from her tenured colleagues in the department of English who had recommended her retention." (There are twenty-one members of the department with tenure, and five had missed the meeting.) But, obviously, a more significant item for the provost—and, clearly, for President Arnold Weber for whom he was also speaking—was Barbara Foley's behavior during the Calero Event:

> Professor Foley's record includes the fact that the administration of Northwestern University last year charged her with grave professional misconduct, in that she violated widely accepted principles of academic freedom and responsibility including those stated in the *Northwestern University Faculty Handbook* (p. 1). She asked for, and received, an open hearing on these charges before an ad-hoc panel of the elected faculty appeals committee.

The provost then quoted from the summary section of the ad-hoc panel's report, and ended by saying that he agreed with that summary. "I support the finding of the university faculty panel that her conduct is 'unacceptable in a university community.' I therefore have decided against offering her further appointment as a member of the Northwestern University faculty."

The faculty reaction to the administration's rejection of tenure for Barbara Foley was much stronger than its reaction to the Calero Event. The coolest reaction was perhaps Prof. Foley's own. Despite the cliché nature of her revolutionary rhetoric, she is no fool and far from being an unsavvy politician. She immediately sent around Xerox copies of the letter from the dean to her and the provost's letter to the dean, and she was quoted the following day in the university newspaper as saying that rejection of her tenure was "clearly a political attack that revealed nakedly the actual nature of power relations in the university," adding that the administration, not the faculty, is assuming control of "the academic business of the university."

Most professors at Northwestern tend to be essentially in business for themselves. They teach, they publish, they apply for grants, they go to their mailboxes ever hopeful that they will have a job offer from Stanford or Michigan, or—O my God, can it be?—Harvard, Yale, or Princeton. Not much in the life of the university community outside their own interests arouses them. But the Foley case did. Of course they almost all found her views "abhorrent," but still, yet, and however she was one of them, a professor, and the administration was still the administration, a historic enemy. A new issue, then, had arisen, and it went by the name of faculty governance. True, there was nothing illegal about the provost's action. The provost of the university is supposed to review all tenure decisions and under an active

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provost these reviews are never perfunctory. Still, in overruling the findings of the various faculty committees in the Foley case, wasn't the administration undercutting the faculty's own power? After putting the faculty through the entire rigmarole of tenure review for Barbara Foley, then rejecting its findings, wasn't the administration acting in bad faith?

Although it was near the end of term, with papers to grade and examinations to give, a flurry of meetings was called. A group of graduate students organized themselves into the Graduate Committee in Support of Barbara Foley. The graduate students and the faculty in the English department met to vote on a resolution first "demanding," then (in quieter language) "urging" the president of the university to reverse the provost's decision in the Foley case. Voted on solely by the English faculty in secret ballot, the resolution passed 17 to 2. (Whose was the other dissenting vote, I wondered.) Letters with lengthy lists of signatories explaining faculty governance were sent off to the metropolitan Chicago press in answer to editorials congratulating the administration for taking a strong stand on academic freedom in the Foley case. To add an Orwellian touch of doublethink, small posters began to appear on the walls of university buildings and in classrooms: "Support Diversity of Opinion, Back Foley!" and "Retain Civil Liberties, Keep Foley!"

Just before final-examination week, on May 28, a rally in support of Barbara Foley was held at what was described in a hand-out as the "Mandela/Crown Center." (The true name of the place is Rebecca Crown Center, the location of the university's administration offices, donated by the Henry Crown family.) It was, literally, a banner day. A podium was set up before a pink banner with black lettering carrying InCAR's initials. "Support Foley" banners were rife. A student carried a banner reading, "Fire Mack, Support Foley!" Four or five people came up to me with various petitions to sign. A faculty member wanted me to sign a petition urging the president to understand he was undermining faculty governance. She let me know—here was an original thought—that she found Barbara Foley's views abhorrent, but a larger issue was at stake. I told her that I didn't find Barbara Foley's views abhorrent, merely crude and preposterous; what I found abhorrent was what she had done and her refusal to offer anything approaching an apology for it.

Speaker after speaker came to the podium. Some were students, claiming that if the university did not retain Prof. Foley it would be shortchanging them on their education; some were from InCAR; some from anti-apartheid groups. A professor from the English department spoke about the importance of faculty governance and the sanctity of the procedure of tenure; a professor who is the representative on campus of the American Association of University Professors rose to say that the AAUP was likely to look askance at the administration's behavior in regard to the Foley case. A man with a ponytail hairdo arrived from the technology part of the campus to say that he had heard the College of Arts and Sciences was planning a "Defoleyation Program." A woman from the philosophy department explained at some length that she had been cheated in her own education by the depredations of the McCarthy years and she did not plan to let it happen again. I could not take my eyes off a very Germanic-looking character got up in a leather jacket, rimless spectacles, a short haircut and mustache, wearing a large gold medal around his neck. He was imitating someone, or something, but what? Of course, it was a Bertolt Brecht imitation; the getup was obviously meant to be a Berliner Ensemble ensemble. (The man turned out to be a local Marxist art historian, and the medal he wore was the medal that goes with his distinguished professorship.)

Meanwhile, everyone except those doing the talking was growing logy with boredom. Nearly two hours had passed. What we were all waiting for, of course, was for Barbara Foley to speak. At last she came to the microphone. There were perhaps a hundred and fifty people gathered. She was greeted by strong applause. For the most part, she spoke in pure clichés: about the administration's political motives in rejecting her for tenure, about its desecration of the principle of faculty governance, about the splendid work of InCAR around the country, about the evil of the *contras* whom she accused of torturing women and cutting off their breasts. Toward the close of her speech, she said, "When I got up on the stage in Harris 107, I had no idea all this would happen, but I have no regrets," and then she added, though I did not catch her exact words, that her only regret was that there hadn't been other faculty members with her on that night.

"You have to admit," Prof. Foley's friends say, "that Barbara has guts." I admit it. She also has a goofy kind of integrity. She calls herself a Marxist-Leninist, but the truth is that she is a poor Leninist indeed. A real Leninist would have apologized at some point—and I myself have little doubt that an apology would have made it very difficult for the provost to do what he did without seeming heartless—and then, in good Leninist fashion, would have gone on with whatever he thought would further the interests of the revolution. It may be that Barbara Foley cannot apologize even to the point of allowing that *perhaps* she went a bit far on the night of the Calero Event, lest she lose face among the students she has been revving up with her rhetoric over the past several years. My own suspicion is that she feels she has nothing for which to apologize. She is not in the least a phony. I think she is a real revolutionary, at least psychologically, and that, now headed toward forty years of age, she is prob-

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ably in for the duration. As I walked away from the rally, I recalled that it was not her beloved Marx but Nietzsche who said that every idea has its autobiography, and I wondered what it was in Barbara Foley's own autobiography that had put the dark and fiery idea of revolution in her head, probably never to be dislodged within her lifetime.

There was to be one more meeting on the Foley case before, so to speak, school was out. With what I am quite certain was unconscious symbolism, the meeting of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty was held in Harris Hall in the same room where Adolfo Calero had been attacked and denied his right to speak. After the reading of various documents by the chairman of the Committee on Promotion and Tenure, the first speaker, a youngish man with a Russian accent, announced that Prof. Foley had outraged any serious conception anyone could possibly hold of the responsibilities of academic citizenship. His accent, which told that he had firsthand experience of totalitarianism and thus cherished freedom all the more, seemed to make little impression on his fellow teachers; another professor quickly rose to say that there was no way to gauge citizenship in a university. Another professor, a teacher of political science, spoke strongly against Prof. Foley's violation of free speech, and said that by this act she had disqualified herself as a member in good standing of the academic community. A few others rose to say that they did not have enough facts to make a careful judgment on the case.

But the reigning feeling in the room was overwhelmingly, if not pro-Foley, at least anti-administration. Much of the behavior I have come to think of as virtucratic was on display: people rising to speak chiefly to show that their hearts were in the right place. Not everyone apparently found Prof. Foley's views and actions abhorrent. A man in what I took to be a Swiss-German accent spoke against the *contras,* and ended by asserting that what Prof. Foley had done was courageous and correct. A left-wing sociologist chipped in with, "I'm sympathetic to speech acts against Mr. Calero." An economist who had served on the Council of Economic Advisers under Jimmy Carter allowed that he found Prof. Foley's views abhorrent, but felt she nevertheless deserved another chance; if she were to do something similar in the future, she should then be stripped of her tenure. A man in a page-boy hairdo and a mustache who looked like a minor character in Shakespeare ("poor Yorick," perhaps) reminded the meeting that Barbara Foley had not been found guilty of a shout-down but of "inciting to a shout-down," though the force of his distinction, of which he seemed rather proud, was lost on the audience. Another sociologist said that he wanted to hear nothing further about Prof. Foley's moral conduct, for surely everyone knew that "the morals of professors are lower than that of a snake." This remark was met with snickering laughter—a roomful of professors took it sitting down. Finally, a resolution was offered to the effect that the Promotion and Tenure Committee write a strong letter to the administration protesting its rejection of Barbara Foley's tenure as a violation of the principle of faculty governance. It passed by a vast majority.

WHERE will it all end? Barbara Foley will be on campus all of next year, and no doubt petitions of varying degrees of stridency will be whirling around, the bullhorn will be blaring nearly full-time in front of the rock, acrimonious arguments will take place, old friendships will break up. Already the American Association of University Professors, which began its life as an organization to set standards of conduct for professors while protecting them against abuses, but has by now turned into a trade union of sorts for university teachers, has written a letter to President Weber calling on him to consider reversing the provost's decision to reject Prof. Foley's tenure. Further appeals may be made; perhaps there will be litigation, for which byzantine grounds will be discovered. Will the administration, the one body at Northwestern University to demonstrate a consistent concern for free speech and academic freedom, be able to maintain its position? With an imagination for disaster, I see myself opening the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in, say, 1991, there to read a three-inch story about one Prof. Barbara Foley being awarded $800,000 in damages and retroactive tenure at Northwestern. Then, again, perhaps the Foley case will slowly fade away, leaving in its wake a young professor who ruined her career because she followed the logic of her nihilistic politics, and leaving few of her colleagues any the wiser.

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The Manchester Connection

Chaim Raphael

WELL-acquainted with grief—as Isaiah puts it—is a customary mode of looking at Jewish history, but one is entitled, sometimes, to try a different approach, to look for surprises. By these I do not mean history-making accidents, like the shape of Cleopatra's nose; there are no accidents in history once one has seen the story as a whole. En route, however, the oddities offer their own reward.

I came across something of this kind recently as an overflow of a book I was writing about Sephardi Jews, *The Road from Babylon*.* In broad terms, Sephardim are Jews who lived in Eastern lands and all around the Mediterranean, with special reference to Spain, in contrast to Ashkenazi Jews who are identified with Northern and Eastern Europe, and later with the West. The major themes of Sephardi history are themselves full of surprises, especially to an Ashkenazi like myself; but I found myself pursuing one story which seemed to turn history around very oddly, largely because it expressed a reversal of the current experience of Sephardim in Israel, forcing one, in fact, to examine more closely some of the clichés about Sephardim which are prevalent there.

The Sephardim of the Near and Middle East were swept into Israel in great numbers after the state was founded in 1948, and are now the majority. The influx created enormous social problems, splitting the population into what seemed like two nations: "Western," well-established Ashkenazi Jews at the top; the new Sephardi immigrants, largely poor and illiterate, at the bottom. Despite all that has been done since the early days to narrow the gap, it is still a grievous problem. Is it linked, perhaps, to some inherent difference of character or ethos which would be highly significant for the future? Endless studies have attempted to deal with this question in technical terms; but a pragmatist looks for parallels from experience. As it happens, one lies to hand, though in a topsy-turvy way: the immigration of Sephardi Jews into the dominantly Ashkenazi community of Manchester, England, in the 19th century.

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It may seem a little far-fetched, in the context of Israel today, to turn back to the unfolding of Sephardi experience in a city famed mainly at the time for its dominance of the world's cotton industry. To the ordinary gaze, Manchester was a dreary city then as it still is, in many respects, today. But if one floats off from this into Jewish life, surprises lie in wait very gratifyingly. To get used to the unexpected, one might venture a startling comparison between Manchester and the town of Safed in Galilee. Physically, the contrast is total, between a sunless city in northwest England and the colorful hill town which produced a messianic movement in the 17th century. Yet Manchester was due to launch its own messianism, and far more effectively, in the 20th century; and it is surely noteworthy that Safed, like Manchester, drew its wealth from a sudden dominance in the textile industry. The difference is that in Manchester's case, the profits were fed into making messianism work.

None of this obliterates the picture of Manchester as the complete expression, in normal terms, of obvious provincialism; yet Jewish history came to life there in decisive ways. In this, two features were paramount. The first was the inflow of Sephardim, gathering strength in the second half of the 19th century. The second was the arrival there, in 1904, of Chaim Weizmann, an organic chemist by profession, but in vision and achievement the leader who was to open the road to a Jewish National Home in Palestine.

MANCHESTER had received "the huddled masses yearning to breathe free" in a pattern similar to New York's. A relatively small number of early Jewish settlers, largely from Germany, had found their feet quite happily until immigration from Eastern Europe mounted in mid-century, rising to an almost unmanageable flood from the 1880's on, after the Russian pogroms. In the earlier immigrations the basic attraction was industry in general, with textile exports very important. Pioneering immigrants saw Manchester, capital of the industrial North, as the key to future greatness. In this spirit, the first English Rothschild settled there in 1797. By 1837

* See the review of this book by Robert M. Seltzer in the August COMMENTARY—ED.

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there were 101 exporting agencies in Manchester, of which 75 were manned by German Jews. At this point, and for a few decades to come, these well-established entrepreneurs took the lead in Jewish affairs in the city, running the synagogue as an oligarchy that kept the poorer Jews—peddlers, stall-keepers, and the like—in their place, but developing leadership that was to help when the masses flooded in.

In the early stages, the upper-class Ashkenazim had had a very easy relationship with non-Jews, participating fully in the life of the urban bourgeoisie, while maintaining a total commitment to Judaism. An outstanding example of this sort of Ashkenazi nabob was Solomon Levi Behrens, whose family, very rich in its earlier home in Hamburg, had expanded into the manufacture of woollen and cotton goods in Bradford, Leeds, and elsewhere in the north of England, while Behrens himself, living palatially with a butler and seven servants, represented the family in Manchester. Behrens and other Jewish associates in the cotton industry and merchant banking (like the Sichels, Bauers, or Franklins) put a good deal into their synagogue; but they also worked together in the political and commercial activities of the area in general. As early as the 1840's, they were prominent in the Anti-Corn Law League and active as well in the many prestigious educational, musical, and social gatherings of the area, very much part of the cultural flowering that would find full expression later in the Manchester *Guardian*. This paper, the symbol of progressive thinking, was in due course to be of immense value to Weizmann when he was seeking, and obtaining, major support from influential political leaders for his espousal of Zionism.

In practical terms, the impoverished masses flooding in from Eastern Europe as the century moved on found sympathy and cautious support among those already established. One normally thinks of this vast migration in terms of its origins in Russia, but in Manchester—and elsewhere in the north of England—the swift growth of a class of disadvantaged Jews living in something like ghetto slums also reflected the transformation of the British economy in the 19th century. In earlier times, Jews without capital or special skills, arriving in England in a trickle to try their luck in areas outside London, had settled mainly in the old cathedral towns and seaports, where they lived on petty commerce; but now it was in the areas of industrial expansion and in the provision of services for a swiftly growing urban population that opportunities beckoned.

There is an intriguing side to this that applies particularly to the growth of the Manchester community. It is often said, with some truth, that many Russian Jews immigrating to Britain in the second half of the 19th century got there by mistake, under the impression that they were being landed in the United States, always assumed to be the lodestar. It now appears, however, that for some years after the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861, immigration to the U.S. slumped heavily. To the Jews, for a certain period, America was perhaps not quite the golden land; and the vast expansion of British industry offered a positive incentive for a time, making cities like Leeds and Manchester goals for permanent settlement.

By American standards, the immigration figures were still very small, at least until the 1880's, when the social consequences in England began to become striking. The wheel of Jewish history was still turning, of course. Today, the descendants of these immigrants have become a new type of British Ashkenazi, in quite a few individual cases bearing royal honors as lords or knights. But a century ago they were seen by the established Jews as truly alien. They spoke their own language, Yiddish; they worshipped in small noisy study groups rather than in newly-built synagogues; they ate their own foods and had their own traditional memories and songs, linked to an abiding sentiment for *der heym* (the homeland, Russia). The analogy is obvious: they were, in brief, exactly like the Sephardi masses who were swept into Israel after 1948, poverty-stricken, bewildered, and resentful of their fate.

AMONG the established Jews of Manchester whom the newcomers would have encountered on their arrival were a significant number of Sephardim, themselves arrived just a bit earlier from Morocco or Syria but now already prospering enough to have exchanged the familiar fez for a silk hat. How was it that the Sephardim who came to Manchester at this time brought such a powerful self-confidence with them, in contrast to the Ashkenazim, who acquired their self-confidence only in the British ambience? The answer lights up another part of Jewish history; for though the Sephardi immigrants were not "grandees," they had one major advantage: they were not desperate in their circumstances. Life, it is true, had not been paradise under Islamic rule. As *dhimmis* ("protected" nonbelievers) they had endured many deprivations of rights. But those established in commerce or finance had assured positions; and it was to expand their business still further that they had begun to send members of the family to open up agencies in the country recognized as preeminent in commerce and political power.

For centuries, the Jews of these Islamic lands had developed financial connections that transcended such national boundaries as existed tenuously in the Middle East; and this meant that they were already familiar with migration and all its opportunities. Manchester beckoned them because the improvements in rail and steamship transport had expanded trading possibilities to India and farther east. The Sephardim, who had not yet joined the throngs of agents settled in

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Manchester to pursue these possibilities, now felt able to do so with the Western knowledge and experience they were acquiring. It was a major factor that the colonial powers had been opening up North Africa to Western influence in the 19th century, with the Jews benefiting greatly from the French *Alliance* schools established in Middle Eastern lands. The British, fortified by Victorian prestige and the ease of communication by sea between northwest England and the Atlantic coast of Morocco, had also pursued such connections.

Manchester's trade with the Mediterranean had been dominated until then by Turkish, Greek, and Syrian non-Jewish merchants who, as described affectionately in a book of memoirs of the time, had already broken through the grayness of the city and the formalism of Anglo-Saxon manners. "As you passed along the busiest streets of the city," we read, "you would suddenly come in sight of some white-turbaned individual, whose Eastern dress appeared in such strong contrast to the somber hues of the attire of all those about him." Part of the charm, it seems, was that these merchants were enormous in size. One, a Turk called Bengelum, was "one of the fattest men I ever saw." The English liked them—perhaps this was a prelude to the Sephardi experience—because they all seemed like characters out of the *Arabian Nights*. It was certainly a prelude to the Sephardim that these exotic merchants were such a closely knit community. "If you could not find your man at his own place of business," our author writes, "you would always be safe at looking for him at Bengelum's, where the bulk of them would be congregated together, some sitting, some reclining, while others would be squatted with their legs doubled under them while they held their midday palaver."

The mode of trade, due to be echoed in time by the Sephardim, followed a form of Oriental procurement as practiced by the merchants of the *suq*. Theodor Minicle the Greek would be seen prowling the streets tirelessly in search of some place where he could get a cheap line in anything. When times were good, as in the days of the war between Russia and Turkey, large fortunes were made by the shipment of almost everything under the sun to the seat of war. With the war over, new markets were sought, principally in Egypt and India. Although fortunes were lost as quickly as they were amassed, the new traders always seemed to prosper. Two Syrian brothers named Cababe had what was almost a monopoly of trade with Aleppo "until the Jews came in, first in twos and threes, and then in shoals."

This is not as hostile as it sounds. The real aliens, to this writer, were the Jews of Russian extraction, living in slums "of a most unedifying character." It was not their fault: "One cannot but feel sorry for the hardships they had to endure before they reached our shore." Nothing similar is said, however, of the style of life of the Sephardi immigrants. Those who had arrived by twos and threes were now living mostly in excellent conditions in the attractive areas of South Manchester; they practiced charity to the poor, but were socially self-contained in synagogue worship and marriage through their endless proliferation of cousins.

Upon their first arrival, some may well have looked different in dress. The fez was routine, as can be seen in old photographs; and stories tell that when families arrived direct from some Arab countries, the women would be in Eastern dress and heavily veiled. As against this, though, many would have been far more cosmopolitan in style than the poor Jews arriving from the *shtetl*. We learn from one historian how vibrant were the links with England of the richer Jews of Mogador, an important port on the Atlantic coast of Morocco. A traveler visiting the home of a wealthy Jewish merchant there would sometimes find women in Victorian attire, practicing the piano and speaking English. A portrait of Queen Victoria would be found in the room where visitors were received. Some of the important merchants—Guedalla, Pinto, Abitbol, and others destined to be very prominent among Manchester Sephardim—had sent members of their families to England from the beginning of the 19th century. As steam transport improved, they would go to England regularly for holidays, and send their children there to be educated.

Within a generation or two, England had turned all these immigrants, Ashkenazi and Sephardi alike, into diverse examples of a solid Anglo-Jewish type, well-educated, liberal in politics, cricket-loving, and poised, all unknowing at first, for the next turn of the wheel: a revolution, orchestrated in Manchester, that would change Jewish history forever through the birth of the state of Israel.

THE obvious link in this process was Chaim Weizmann, who arrived penniless in Manchester in 1904 but was able over the next decade to rise to a position of unique authority. His prize was the Balfour Declaration, issued by the British government in 1917 and promising a National Home for the Jews in Palestine. It was a dazzling moment; but to state the facts so baldly leaves out of account an extraordinary change in the nature of the Zionist drive that took place during these years, and passes over a series of operational turning points where the Manchester connection has to be called providential.

According to the usual outline, Weizmann was at the peak of his influence in 1917; his brilliant scientific discoveries, enabling the British to produce acetone for munitions during World War I, gave him access to many top British politicians whom he converted to Zionism. But for a fuller

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understanding one has to reach back to Britain's absolute faith, still dominant at that time, in the Victorian symbiosis of power and virtue, with the Bible its inspiration and the Manchester *Guardian* its voice. Weizmann had persistently cherished these very notions about the British since his schooldays, as we see from a famous letter he wrote to his *cheder* teacher at the age of eleven, proclaiming that only England would save the Jews. Now a mature man of forty, he expounded the same approach in the context of Britain's own imperial needs, while working tirelessly on the Jewish front to invest Zionism with new ideas.

In its then-current organization, the Zionist movement reflected a peculiar amalgamation of Russian-Jewish emotion and German technocracy. Weizmann respected both forces but also repudiated them, when he felt like it, in cutting terms. In seeking mass support from Russian Jewry, his main aim was to counteract the pseudo-nationalism of the Bundists, Jews who regarded a socialist revolution in Russia as preferable to settlement in the ancient homeland. On a different front, he also sought desperately to make Zionists conscious of the redeeming qualities of Jewish cultural endeavors, as distinct from seeing Zionism solely in terms of land purchase and technical progress.

For the time being Weizmann was a relative outsider in the movement, controlled as it was by leaders in Russia and Germany; fretting at this, he was always being tempted to get involved more directly, even at the cost of interrupting his all-important scientific work. Just before the outbreak of war in 1914, he was very close to leaving England in order to work at the head Zionist office in Berlin. In the light of what was to happen in England during the war years, it would obviously have been a catastrophe both for Weizmann and Zionism. Instead, he was able to maintain his totally independent status, aided by earnings from patents. The Russian Revolution in 1917 and the defeat of Germany in the following year reoriented the whole Zionist power structure toward England and, later, the U.S. Weizmann was now ready to exploit to the full the status he had first established through his position at the university in Manchester.

This is not to say that he was always happy working there. Before he emerged with full authority after the Balfour Declaration, he had wavered violently between an infectious enthusiasm and an all-consuming fury at everybody else's laziness and ineptitude. Logically, Manchester was a blessing. It had been a refuge in his despair at Zionist politics after the death of the charismatic leader, Theodor Herzl; and to have found a home in a university, with a chance to pursue major research, gave him great joy. Yet he hated having been sidetracked to the miseries of this cold and alien northern town, living among Jews for whom, to begin with, he felt total distaste. "The local Zionists," he wrote to his fiancée, Vera, in Russia, "are, with few exceptions, idiots. The intellectual element is almost entirely nonexistent." Though he pursued every chance to address Zionist meetings in England, the contrast with what he remembered of Russia was always depressing. "Everything in England," he wrote after his first year, "is dreary: materialist and money-making. There is none of that poetical tone perceptible in Russian Jewry."

It was this feeling for inner "poetical tone" that had made him so passionate to save the Jews of Russia. But in reality the Russian picture was inexpressibly dreary, as he acknowledged after a tour: "Not a single animated face, not a single smile: all around dead shadows." Even so, however, there was an underlying sense of value: "One is compelled to marvel at the great moral force that lives in the hungry Jew. In such conditions, others would have turned into beasts long ago." This irrepressible faith in the moral value of the Jewish people was what Weizmann communicated so powerfully to the English leaders he met even in his early Manchester days, and it certainly helped to spark their decision to issue the Balfour Declaration.

To the passion he conveyed in these personal meetings, Weizmann added a logical power of exposition evident in the letters he would send after each meeting. For the Manchester connection, the most eloquent tribute comes from the editor of the *Guardian*, C.P. Scott, who was to open every political door to Weizmann when he moved to London. After their first meeting, Weizmann, in his inimitable style compounding argument and charm, had written to Scott to thank him for listening so patiently: "It is the first time in my life that I have spoken out to a non-Jew all the intimate thoughts. I can't tell you what good it did." Scott replied that he had been totally absorbed: "There are few people who have the courage of an ideal and at the same time the insight and energy which make it possible."

Amid all the trails out of Manchester which Weizmann pursued so zealously, the one which hardly surfaces is the Sephardi. Perhaps not surprisingly, the circumstances and fate of Russian Jewry dominated everything for him; yet under his nose in Manchester was living evidence of a wider Jewish theme which would, in the course of time, become of major significance in Israel. One might have expected that inklings of this would come through to a man of Weizmann's percipience, but it seems to have been beyond his ken, though as time went on he did what he could to establish personal contacts that would be useful.

One example worth citing for its overtones of future significance was his friendship with a Manchester Zionist family called Nahum, whose background was an endless network of Sephardi con-

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nections over the whole of the Near East. The patriarchal figure to whom they were linked was Hillel Hayim Picciotto, who had settled in Aleppo from Leghorn in 1732, and whose descendants had lived all over the Near East as well as in England. As major merchants, they had acted as consuls for many European countries, with Austria turning one of them into *Ritter* (Knight) von Picciotto, an honor less important, perhaps, than the election of a Picciotto to the presidency of the grandee Sephardi synagogue in London.

Manchester comes into the picture here because of the marriage of Marie, one of three daughters of Mosheh Daniel de Picciotto, to Alfonso Nahum, head of a very prosperous textile mill in Manchester. Marie became celebrated herself in Zionist leadership, and Weizmann was certainly a visitor to her palatial South Manchester home, "Mount Efraim." It is also known that he tried (and failed) to get one member of the Picciotto family—who had been appointed a senator in Egypt—to take over the direction of Middle East Zionist affairs.

The Nahum-Picciotto family and others, like the widely distributed Dwek family that lived for centuries in Aleppo, tended to have ancestors who combined rabbinical distinction with skills as merchants and bankers. Their close attachment to Palestine, usually through cousins living there, did not always lead them into strong Zionist involvement, though this did come about later after the state emerged. By this time the multitude of Sephardim everywhere in the Near East had brought to the fore a historic presence that early Zionists had tended to ignore. In Weizmann's day it was less a problem than a rather exotic footnote to the familiar Russian pattern of Jewish life.

One can still think of it this way in digging out Sephardi names and origins as retained in Manchester synagogue archives of the mid-19th century. Many Sephardi immigrants of this time had temporarily joined the Ashkenazi synagogue to secure religious facilities. A list for 1856 to 1863 has forty-seven Sephardi names, all very evocative. To select a few: the Besso, Matatia, Dento, and Raffaelo families from Corfu; Anzerut, Abbadi, Dwek, Bigio, and Betesh from Syria; Rosa from Constantinople; Azulay from Morocco. Within the next decades the origins become more diverse still, including Smooha and Sahal from Egypt, Davide, Elias, and Sasson from Baghdad. There was a particularly large influx of cotton merchants from Mogador and Meknes in Morocco in the early 20th century. Some of the Sephardim had interests outside cotton, such as the Politi family who manufactured Turkish Delight—and still do.

The very wide distribution of the Jewish presence in the Near and Middle East makes it clear, in hindsight, that migration to a Jewish homeland in Palestine would pose great problems of population transfer. But Weizmann, like other Zionist leaders, never foresaw mass pressure in Islamic lands for wholesale migration, in contrast to the situation in Eastern Europe, where emigration was the leading issue. In Islamic lands, the rich and educated might move, but the masses stayed put. Whereas, in Eastern Europe, modernization, conflict, and the battle of new ideas stirred everything up, the Sephardi masses seemed unable to break out of a deadly and static existence.

It was among the Russian Jews, therefore, that Weizmann focused his passion, with his leadership ever stronger as his years in Manchester moved on. It was typical that though his circle of friends widened all the time to include intellectuals and other social and political leaders, his special friend remained Joseph Massel, a Russian Jew who was a printer and Hebrew poet living in the slums of Manchester. Massel had been the first person to offer him a meal and a bed on his arrival, and Weizmann always enjoyed his company, luxuriating in nostalgic memories of *der heym*.

Yet it was in a Sephardi home in Manchester that one of the most decisive meetings for Weizmann and the future homeland took place. The story is told in a book of memoirs by a Manchester businessman, Israel Sieff, who, in alliance with his brother-in-law and close friend Simon Marks, was already helping to lay the foundations of the vast Marks and Spencer merchandising empire that would ultimately emerge from this city.

Both men came from a Russian Jewish background. Sieff's family had become prominent in the cotton industry, while Marks, taking over from his immigrant father who had started in a market stall, became a genius at merchandising. In due course, these two men, with their families and close associates, were to put great resources into the support of Weizmann's work, seeing him, with his "synthetic" program of dreams and practicalities, as a kind of messiah—one who was not going to be allowed to fail.

At the age of twenty-four, Sieff had been a Zionist for seven years but had not yet met Weizmann. In the summer of 1913 he and his wife Becky (a sister of Marks) were invited to dinner at the home of a Sephardi merchant, Sam Cohen, originally from Egypt and for some years, unusually, an ardent Zionist. Weizmann and his wife Vera were the only other guests. Sieff's impression on first meeting Weizmann has to be told in his own words:

> I was struck by his personality almost before I had taken in the details of his appearance. It was magical, overwhelming. . . . His eyes were full of life, but they were somber. . . . The expressions on his face changed quickly and easily, as his discourse moved along. . . . I listened to him rapt.

The next day Sieff went to see Weizmann and pleaded with him to let him work as his assistant, to share the burden in every possible way. From

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then on he was at his side through the missions to Palestine, the Peace Conference in Paris at the end of World War I, and the Mandate discussions. Funds and influence were marshaled on an ever-growing scale throughout the world until the day in May 1948 when Chaim Weizmann became the first President of Israel.

THIS was not, of course, the end of the story for Manchester. The wheel has gone on turning; and one major instance has to be told, however briefly, to illustrate the pleasure of the unexpected.

To appreciate the context one must take note of some quite remarkable developments in the Sephardi-Ashkenazi relationship in the four decades since Israel came into being. In the forefront of these is yet another, ongoing reversal of status, with the social gap in Israel now decisively narrowed and the political power of the Sephardim risen to a new level of importance. And there is a certain connection here to another significant change. In recent decades, the international Sephardi business and financial community seems to have emerged out of its former anonymity and into high and visible gear. Undoubtedly this has been due in large part to the complete upheaval in the residence situation of well-off Sephardim all over the Near and Middle East; the expulsion of Jews from Arab lands has imparted a volatility the Sephardim never knew before. What was once bottled up has been given its head. The jinn, as it were, has come out of the bottle.

A striking example, very fully chronicled in the world's financial press, is the episode in which the Trade Development Bank of Geneva, presided over by the Sephardi Edmond Safra, of Aleppo-Lebanese origin, was acquired for a huge sum in January 1983 by the international banking division of American Express in order, we are told, to draw in the deposits of Safra's 30,000 Sephardi depositors. In stormy developments since then, the question has been whether Safra, an acknowledged financial genius, will always be able to count on Sephardi loyalty while facing the rivalry of another Sephardi, Albert Benezra, of Turkish origins, in struggles which one can surely call, without offense, Levantine.

But here comes Manchester, where Sephardi involvement in current big-business amalgamations has, at least in one respect, a very comforting side. With few exceptions, the Sephardim of Manchester who engaged in the cotton trade were merchants rather than mill owners; but within recent years a Sephardi named David Alliance, born in Iran and arriving in England in 1951, has become head of a vast textile combine called Vanton Viyella, which, after its recent amalgamation with another empire called Coats Patons, has become one of the largest textile firms in the world. David Alliance, it turns out, is a passionate supporter of Israel, and works hard with other business leaders to improve its economy. But something even more striking for Israel's future is embedded in his story. In extending his empire in 1983, Alliance agreed to merge with a huge knitted-goods firm of Nottingham, built up in the last few years by Harry Djanogly. Djanogly is an Ashkenazi, whose family escaped from Russia in 1917 and settled in Germany before coming to England in 1937.

Can we take this merger as a sign that the ancient separations are over? If so, it is fitting that the word should go forth out of Manchester.

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Yuppies in Rhyme

Carol Iannone

To have written the "perfect book for the 1980's" may sound like a dubious achievement, but in the case of Vikram Seth's first novel, *The Golden Gate*,* a publisher's blurb may for once approach accuracy. The thirty-four-year-old author, a Stanford Ph.D. candidate in economics, has spun an up-to-date tale of San Francisco "Yuppiedom" —and he has done it, what is more, in verse, broadly modeling his book after the subject (young love) and the tone (mild bemusement) of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin,* and adopting that classic Russian poem's intricate form as well (iambic tetrameter sonnets rhymed aBaBccDDeFFeGG).

And he makes it work. As a formal device, Seth's versification is engaging, clever, and responsive to the subject matter. One is pleased, and even (although that may not have been the intention) reassured, to find that computers and nuclear arms can be treated without embarrassment in narrative verse. The vocabulary is rich and varied, ranging as needed from the lofty, erudite, and archaic to the trendy and quotidian. The verse can be lyrically fresh or dramatically intense. Line groupings and sentence structure are handled flexibly and, when necessary to punctuate an idea or shape a point, ingeniously. If occasionally a rhyme seems forced, a word choice awkward, a meter strained, overall the language proves remarkably elastic and capable.

Seth's efforts have by no means gone unappreciated. Critics of all stripes have responded to *The Golden Gate* with respect, affection, and even gratitude for what the poet John Hollander has called "a charmingly unique sort of minor masterpiece, a tour de force of the transcendence of the mere tour de force." If ours were a versifying age like the Renaissance, when, as Virginia Woolf noted in another context, every man seemed capable of song or sonnet, it may be that the critics would have been more stringent in their assessment of Seth's prosodic efforts. But in our poetry-starved time, who can fail to welcome such an exuberant and expansive resuscitation of a verse form from a golden age of literary and imaginative possibility?

Unfortunately, there is a problem with this elegant literary divertissement, and that is its content. The ideas and themes of *The Golden Gate* derive wholly from the arsenal of contemporary liberal orthodoxies, now apparently so deeply entrenched in the literary imagination as to have achieved defining moral status. Of course, there is nothing wrong with a writer's appealing to current ideas and beliefs, or to his incorporating them as elements in telling his story and shaping his vision—but in *The Golden Gate,* the ideology *is* the vision.

The story begins when one John Brown, a successful twenty-six-year-old product of Berkeley and Silicon Valley, is nearly "brained" by a frisbee while walking through Golden Gate Park, and is thus with amusing improbability made to feel the loneliness of his emotion-dry, work-centered single life. His ex-girlfriend, Janet Hayakawa, a Japanese-American sculptress and part-time drummer in a rock band named Liquid Sheep, sympathetically takes out a personal ad in his name. Through this thoroughly contemporary contrivance, John meets and falls in love with Liz Dorati, a Stanford Law graduate. As they blissfully set up housekeeping, Liz's brother Ed, and John's best friend Phil, a young divorced father who has quit *his* Silicon Valley job to become a peace activist, also begin an affair. But Ed, deeply in thrall to traditional Christianity, raises religious objections to their love and Phil sadly gives him up. In a sudden twist, partly precipitated by the news that her mother is dying of cancer, Liz realizes that her own relationship with the still emotionally rigid John cannot work and decides to marry the more easygoing Phil, not out of "love" but out of "like," which both now believe is the more reliable emotion.

For his part, John is horrified and disgusted to learn of Phil's homosexual indulgence, and is further hurt and angered by Phil's and Liz's marriage. After a bitter spree of one-night stands and singles bars, he starts up again, promisingly if tentatively, with Janet, only to lose her in an automobile accident. While Phil and Liz care for their expanding family, which includes Phil's son, a child who survived the auto accident that killed Janet, and their own newborn baby boy, John is left aching and alone. But the book closes on a note of bittersweet possibility: now that he has learned of life's fragility, John may at last be ready to accept whatever love or friendship comes his way, on whatever terms.

More than one critic has conceded that, the feat of versification apart, the plot of *The Golden Gate* is slender, the characterizations sketchy and flat. It might be closer to the truth to say that, in the hands of a lesser artist than Pushkin, versification of this sort actually seems to encourage flatness and superficiality of a kind that would be intolerable in prose. But whatever the reason, *The Golden Gate* sports a slick emotional veneer such as one associates less

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with serious fiction than with a Hollywood film like *The Big Chill*, with a few Snoopy greeting-card sentiments about love and friendship thrown in for good measure.

But its problems go deeper than this. Seth does not so much create characters, round or flat, as grade them on a scale of prefabricated moral possibilities. As one critic remarked, apparently in admiration, "the novel's ultimate morality is severe. Crucially, it's the bisexual and idealistic Phil . . . who quit his job at Datatronics to join the peace movement, who ends up favored by fortune while priggish homophobic John emerges with his initial desolation intact." Characters are defined in terms of where they stand on the issues, with life's sweetest secrets yielding to those on the correct side of the correct causes.

Take, for example, that *summa* of causes, peace. As an activist, Phil is obviously the most advanced on the moral scale. Next comes Liz, who grows increasingly enlightened through contact with Phil; at a peace rally, she makes an impromptu speech in defense of "all the other fauna/that have developed here on/the earth." Ed, who believes in working for peace in the individual heart—"to curb our own complicity/In violence and in exploitation"—is judged to be simply ineffective; as Phil puts it, "By the time your catholicon/ Acts on our guts, we'll all be gone." Finally there is John, who despises the antinuke movement.

John believes the U.S. is superior to the Soviet Union, and he worries that the peace movement will "*give* them the rope to hang us with." He remarks to Phil: "Spout here: you'll come to little harm./ Spout there: the KGB will sell you/ A ticket to a dexterous shrink/ Who'll drug you dumb to help you think." But Phil has a response to this: "But their state wouldn't look so bad/To someone sunk in unemployment/—Of which we've plenty —or disease./Bankrupted by his medical fees,/I doubt that he'd get much enjoyment/From all his fabled freedoms." And besides, Phil asks, "How can you think of we or they/When we're both in the soup?" The two go back and forth, with Phil predictably gaining the upper hand each time.

Seth lays out the case for "peace" in other ways as well. He mockingly describes the presumed attitude of the scientists who make the bombs: "When something's technically attractive/You follow the conception through,/That's all. What if you leave a slew/of living dead, of radioactive/'Collateral damage' in its wake?/It's just a job, for heavens sake." And he devotes a large section of his book to a loving evocation of a peace demonstration (no mildly bemused tone here) including a ten-page speech by an activist priest who follows a Christianity clearly more to Seth's liking than Ed's. In this speech the whole argument against nuclear defense is piously set forth, and we are reminded how our country always seems to need an enemy to hate—"Even before we'd reached Berlin/Moscow was our new sump of sin."

Another gauge of moral beatitude is one's attitude toward work. Phil has already seen the light and quit his defense-related job at Datatronics in order "to save the world." Liz continues to work "at the staid law firm Cobb & Kearney," requesting just six months' maternity leave at her baby's birth but also demanding the privilege of defending needy political clients independently and *pro bono*. The benighted John, meanwhile, remains at his job at Datatronics; although troubled by his discussions with Phil, he continues to defend "The assuring axiom that the more/The bombs, the less the chance of war." As for Ed, by book's end he seems to have quit his job in advertising but, having no social vision, remains adrift and aimlessly self-absorbed.

PERHAPS even cruder than these judgments is the book's system of racial and ethnic characterizations. John, for example, is the only child of an apparently loveless Wasp home. His father, his only surviving parent, is English, and "Retired in his native Kent, Rarely responds to letters sent/(If rarely) by his transatlantic/offspring." The presumed emotional aloofness of the Anglo-Saxon appears, indeed, to be a cardinal sin of the West in the eyes of the Indian-born Seth. Phil's former in-laws do not care for "Claire Cabot marrying Philip Weiss—/For all their Wasp stings of advice." As a "good atheist Jew," Phil serves in Seth's universe as a desirable foil to a poker-spined Anglo society: his "scorn of 'country-clubbing rabble,'/His jangling views, his uncouth jokes,/And (once, at Christmas with Claire's folks)/His use of 'queynte' to win at Scrabble,/Resulted in a virtual ban/On Phil from the whole Cabot clan." But on the book's terms it is the Oriental Janet Hayakawa who is the most firmly fixed in a sense of nurturant family solidarity, selfless, giving, unconditionally loving, creative (one of her sculptures is entitled "Mother Hen").

As a woman, Liz is by definition emotionally more elastic than John, while John, a typical young male of our time, is of course a problem to begin with. In his emotional reserve, his tendency to possessive jealousy, his disdain for peace activism, and his repudiation of homosexuality, we are clearly meant to discern the root problems of patriarchy. At times *The Golden Gate* almost seems patterned after an episode of *All in the Family*, with John, a younger, educated, sophisticated Archie Bunker being tutored in simple truths by representatives of various human groups in possession of the warmer and more natural impulses of life.

Perhaps nowhere is Seth's trusting subscription to current orthodoxies more glaring than in his casually sophisticated portrayal of homosexuality. It is taken for granted in this book that the only permissible attitude toward homosexuality is one of complete and favorable acceptance; indeed, in Seth's eyes, whatever moral complications may surround homosexual practice are ascribable not to that practice itself but to cultural and religious prejudices against it. Ed's objections, religious in nature, are rendered in caricature—after his first night with Phil, he agonizes: "O my God, I've muzzled/Love's only true voice, Jesus Christ,/Who came to earth and sacrificed/His life for me . . . for me, a sinner." He cautions

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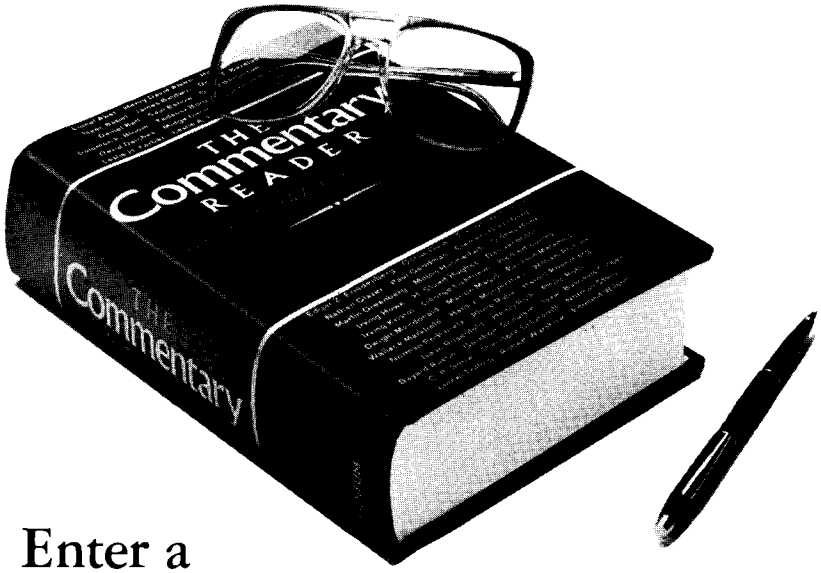

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Phil: "The Bible says, if a man lie/With a man, he must surely die./It's in Leviticus, chapter 20,/ Verse 13—which means it's as true for me, a Christian, as for you." He further counsels: "When our will fails, we've got to pray, 'Help thou my unbelief.'" To which Phil, the good atheist Jew, responds, "That's bullshit."

But to say that Seth's attitude toward homosexuality is one of casual sophistication is not to say that he regards it as without moral content. On the contrary, for him it possesses decisive moral weight—it is life-enhancing and spiritually expansive. The ability to accept homosexuality in oneself or in others becomes one of those measures of a character's entitlement to emotional rewards. Moreover, in Phil, who effortlessly and unreflectingly travels from a homosexual affair into heterosexual domesticity, Seth goes beyond respect for the separate integrity of the homosexual experience to a vision of breezy bisexual integration as an ascendant moral norm. In this vision above all *The Golden Gate* decisively earns its credentials as a "book for the 1980's."

Henry James, in an acute insight into Pushkin's complex attitude toward Eugene in *Eugene Onegin*, wrote that the poet both saw through his hero and admired him. This is emphatically not true of Seth's attitudes toward his characters. Whom he admires (Phil, for example) he does not see through; whom he sees through (John, chiefly) he cannot really admire. In any work of art, and especially in one with aspirations as high as those of *The Golden Gate*, this is a fatal failing. One may therefore assume that most of the critics who praised this book were entranced with its view of life as well as its technical virtuosity, while others may have been willing to overlook its view of life precisely because of its technical virtuosity. But as Vikram Seth has himself asserted, "it is a truism that in a work of art one can't easily separate form and content." One not only can't; one shouldn't.

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The Life of Ideas

MARRIAGE AND MORALS AMONG THE VICTORIANS. By GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB. *Knopf. 253 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by MYRON MAGNET

THERE IS nothing academic about Gertrude Himmelfarb's splendid collection of essays, *Marriage and Morals Among the Victorians.* Unlike those intellectual historians whose pleasure is watching ideas slowly gliding down the vistas of history, splitting apart, combining and recombining, banging together and repelling or swallowing or exploding each other like organisms with lives of their own, Miss Himmelfarb cares about ideas as they have to do with the lives of those who think them. How is this or that idea actually *lived*? What experience gave rise to it? What kind of social order issues from it? Does this idea or that, whatever its proponents' claims for it, really tell us anything about how to live?

Consider, for instance, the welter of notions that make up the ethos of that group of early 20th-century writers, painters, and intellectuals known as the Bloomsbury group. The children and grandchildren of an interrelated aristocracy of intellectuals, social reformers, and philanthropists, the "Bloomsberries" turned upside down the strenuous, civic-minded moral and social ethic to which their parents had themselves clung after rejecting the evangelical religion of their own highminded parents. Following the message of G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica*—that the highest goods are "a total commitment to 'personal affections' and 'aesthetic enjoyments'" for their own sakes—the Bloomsbury group made a religion of art and a cult of the artist, as each of them deemed himself to be.

Theirs was an art with a difference, Miss Himmelfarb explains in "A Genealogy of Morals: From Clapham to Bloomsbury" (originally published in COMMENTARY, February 1985). The novel, conceived by Virginia Woolf as a species of poetry, broke away from the representation and interpretation of social reality and strove to become "self-sufficient, a thing-in-itself." Similarly, painting, in the hands of Roger Fry, created "constructions which do not stand for something else, but appear to have ultimate value." Bodied forth in this art was "an inspiration by which to live"—an inspiration that, not surprisingly, "was entirely private and personal, not a way to live in society but a way to live with oneself, with one's own feelings and sensibilities."

As for artists, according to the Bloomsbury group their role was to cultivate those "timeless, passionate states of contemplation and communion" from which such inspiration flows. "Being good" rather than "doing good" was their calling, and it made them of greater worth than ordinary folk who followed custom and habit rather than the "vast variety and turmoil of human impulses." And so the Bloomsberries, like the gods in "The Lotos Eaters" on their bed of asphodel, formed a community of amoral superior beings, who among themselves perfected those "personal affections" that completed G.E. Moore's conception of the highest good.

And what were the personal relations that gave these superior beings such worth? The Higher Sodomy is what they themselves called the "compulsive and promiscuous" homosexuality that shuffled and reshuffled their relationships in a variety of permutations amazing even to them. And this behavior could have a particularly nasty edge, as in the fate of Angelica Bell. Her husband, David Garnett, had before she was born been the lover of her father, Duncan Grant, and had tried to seduce her mother, Vanessa Stephen, who was married to Clive Bell when she had the affair with Duncan Grant that produced poor Angelica, with her almost satirical name. As with some obscure antinomian sect, this forbidden behavior only served to intensify the Bloomsberries' sense of special election. For Miss Himmelfarb it points up the "callowness, conceit, and complacency" of their ideas.

NOT only does action often disclose the ultimate tendency of ideas, but—conversely—understanding and judging what people do often requires knowing the idea that informs their behavior. What people think they are doing, what they intend, is part of the meaning of what they do. Consider the case of the five eminent couples Miss Himmelfarb discusses in this book's title essay, a rejoinder to Phyllis Rose's *Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages.* Eminent but "irregular": the Thomas Carlyles and the John Ruskins never consummated their marriages; George Eliot and G.H. Lewes lived together unmarried because he could not get a divorce; John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor grew intimate (if chastely so) long before her first husband died and they could marry; and Dickens—the great practitioner of the family novel—left his wife and the mother of his nine children for a young actress.

To Phyllis Rose (as summarized by Miss Himmelfarb) these couples exemplify the universal truth that marriage is a power relationship; for their response to that circumstance she most admires Jane Carlyle, who achieved equality by perpetual resistance and rebellion, and George Eliot and G.H. Lewes, who sidestepped the issue in their happy cohabitation, unencumbered by marriage or children and, because of their social ostracism, unburdened by dinner parties, week-

MYRON MAGNET *is the author of* Dickens and the Social Order, *now available in paperback from the University of Pennsylvania Press.*

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end guests, and each other's friends. "Treated as sinful lovers," writes Mrs. Rose, "they remained lovers." By making the relationship a matter only of personal commitment, not of law or convention, they reestablished morality "on a more serious, a more existential, basis."

Miss Himmelfarb rightly finds these judgments mistaken and grotesque. Jane Carlyle stands out not for her rebellion but for the extraordinary "love and devotion that transcended all the difficulties and frustrations" of marriage to her impotent, cranky, difficult, sometimes cruel genius of a husband. As for Phyllis Rose's estimate of George Eliot and Lewes—that it is "liberating not to have children or friends, to shun society and public life"—Miss Himmelfarb thinks it "as extraordinary a vision of marital (or extramarital) bliss as it is of human freedom."

Worse, it is not at all the vision these eminent Victorians themselves held of what they were doing—something Phyllis Rose would have known had she attended to their social and moral ideas rather than imposing her own sexual politics on them. Far from flaunting their "irregularity," they viewed it as an unfortunate lapse, to be regularized if possible or else concealed, for they subscribed wholly, almost obsessively, to a morality rooted in law and custom. And like other eminent Victorians, they did so out of their beliefs about the sources of meaningfulness and dignity in their own lives. "Feeling guilty about the loss of their religious faith, suspecting that the loss might expose them to the temptations of immorality and the perils of nihilism, anticipating the Nietzschean dictum that if God does not exist everything is permitted, they were determined to make of morality a substitute for religion," Miss Himmelfarb writes. "And having forfeited the sanctions of religion, they were thrown back all the more on the sanctions of convention and law."

Such principles proved adequate to endow the lives of these figures with worth and purpose. But other Victorians, similarly unsettled by the crisis of belief that Miss Himmelfarb takes as central to the era's intellectual life, looked elsewhere for authoritative precepts by which to live as individuals and in groups. One characteristic answer, widely persuasive even today, is a faith in rationality that Miss Himmelfarb finds naive at best. As a case in point she holds up, in "Bentham's Utopia," the plan devised by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) for "managing" England's paupers, which unfolds step by rational step to a totalitarian conclusion made grimmer by Bentham's sincere incomprehension of what makes life human.

Bentham's totalitarianism did not flinch from the prospect of incarcerating over a tenth of England's population in prisonlike "Houses of Industry" owned by shareholders and run by efficient, profit-seeking independent contractors who would turn the ceaseless labor of the dross of society if not into gold then at least into sterling. People would be born into such institutions and die out of them, Bentham imagined. As he grew enthusiastic over the reasonableness of his scheme, he convinced himself of the positive felicity of the pauper's life—healthy, secure, clean, and with so rudimentary an education for the children that they would never imagine there was more to want in life (especially since they would work from the age of four and be separated from their fathers and other elders who could tell them what they were missing). Perhaps, Miss Himmelfarb mildly observes, utilitarianism—"a philosophy that professes to be eminently rational and pragmatic, untainted by any metaphysical or religious assumptions"—could stand a thoroughgoing reappraisal if it could produce, through the pen of its founder, a monstrosity like this.

Similarly anti-humanistic is the

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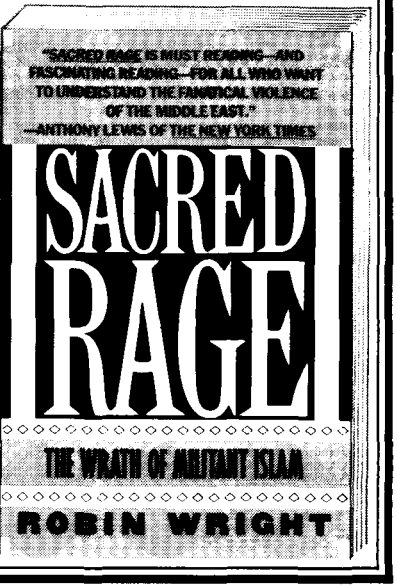
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utopian rationalism of William Godwin (1756-1836), with its belief that men are perfectible and can become totally free of such irrational, misleading impulses as self-love, prejudice, competitiveness—from passion, period. For Godwin, to live entirely according to reason means the "total extirpation of the infirmities of our nature": say goodbye to disease, fatigue, melancholy, lust, perhaps even to mortality. The only impediment is government—because any government, no matter how just, corrupts our nature. Once liberated from institutions of any kind, human perfectibility will assert itself.

No wonder, says Miss Himmelfarb, that under the spell of Godwin's philosophy young men like Wordsworth and Coleridge saw in the French Revolution only the pangs of the rebirth of human nature out of "custom, law, and statute" into the light of Reason—this, even after the Revolution had turned bloodthirsty with the execution of the king and the queen and the declaration of war on England.

"The humanist," writes Miss Himmelfarb, "accepting human nature with all its infirmities, recognizing . . . that men are always 'creatures of passion,' seeks to reform social institutions so as to make men more rational and more virtuous. . . . It is the utopian who is so dissatisfied with human nature, so obsessed with a vision of perfection, that he can only seek to transform human nature and social institutions. . . . Perfect (or near-perfect) men . . . do not require any institutions." Such utopianism is "a dangerous illusion which tempts us, in the name of the best, to reject the better and end up with the worse."

Godwin grew up in a strange Calvinist sect—the Sandemanians—for whom reason rather than faith or works was the source of salvation: his political theory did not come out of nowhere. After his year-long affair with Mary Wollstonecraft taught him that the infirmities of our nature hold their own pleasures, he looked more kindly on such imperfect human consolations as sentiment and Whiggery. But another of Miss Himmelfarb's rationalists, the Fabian socialist Beatrice Webb (1858-1943), was driven by her own early experience in the opposite direction; she increasingly moved toward making a religion of reason.

Torn between the energetic, rationalistic practicality of her beloved, life-affirming, venture-capitalist father and the gloomy, life-denying, religious austerity of her self-concentrated mother, Beatrice Potter reconciled the two tendencies in her marriage and lifelong intellectual partnership with Sidney Webb. Sidney had all her father's unselfconscious, optimistic, scientific-minded energy, aimed at getting results. But with his "tiny, tadpole body," his "Jewish nose," his "underbred" accent, he was profoundly unattractive to her, especially by comparison with the seductive cabinet minister Joseph Chamberlain whom she had rejected despite her passionate love for him, since his idea of marriage would have required her to obliterate her own selfhood. Her marriage consequently had its own measure of life-denial, which extended to her ascetic abstemiousness, her stingy, seminar-like dinner parties, her distrust of emotions and of the "average sensual man."

But the reconciliation was not perfect. All the selfless labor shoulder-to-shoulder with Sidney on behalf of socialism—the research, the writing, the lecturing, the ceaseless behind-the-scenes effort to persuade politicians and opinion-makers to her way of thinking—finally was not enough. Her Fabian science of society might well show how society should be organized to a particular end; it could not, however, determine what the end should be. For that she needed a faith, which, sadly, she ultimately found in the Soviet Union, with its "professed faith" in science, its "moral uplift," and its Communist party like a " 'religious order' complete with 'strict disciplines' and 'vows of obedience and poverty.' " Despite purges, Moscow trials, and the rest, she kept that faith till she died in 1943—suggesting that Fabianism had within it something more than the safe, decent, prudent moderation generally taken as its keynote.

If scientific rationalism is an unsatisfactory guide to ordering society, science by itself is even less useful, despite the continual invocation of its authority by one social theory after another. A prime case in point are the social theories derived from Darwinism, on which Miss Himmelfarb is an established expert. They have had a curious, contradictory evolution, beginning with the crude Social Darwinism of Herbert Spencer with its assertion that the struggle for existence ought to rule the social world no less than the natural world, assuring the survival of the fittest. Countering Darwinism's image of man as a mere combative creature of nature, the poet Tennyson "looked to evolution as the instrument for the redemption of man, the means by which he would rise above nature, would . . . 'Move upward, working out the beast,/And let the ape and tiger die.' " For Darwin's great supporter, T.H. Huxley, society worked on a principle *opposed* to the principle governing nature; its ethical progress depended not on imitating nature but on combating it. And A.R. Wallace, co-discoverer of the theory of natural selection, denied that evolution could account for the development of the human brain or of man's moral capacity.

The authoritativeness of science evaporates in this debate. And the same may be said today of the furor over sociobiology, a theory associated most notably with Edward O. Wilson of Harvard. Wilson claims that his theory, according to which "human emotions and ethical ideas and practices have been programmed to a substantial degree by natural selection," reconciles the split between the Two Cultures (to use C.P. Snow's famous phrase), for it is a theory that blends "biology and the social sciences." But as Miss Himmelfarb points out, the gap Snow deplored was between science and the *humanities,* and that gulf is as wide as ever.

In fact, writes Miss Himmelfarb, ethical and social questions require

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answers not from science, which has little to say about human value, but from the humanities. Too bad, she remarks, that the humanities are now engaged in deconstructing, desocializing, and demoralizing themselves, "stripping them of any recognizable social and human reality." That is a tendency Miss Himmelfarb resolutely opposes. This wise, humane, and moving book shows how right she is to do so.

World Struggle

GAME PLAN: A GEOSTRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE U.S.-SOVIET CONTEST. By ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI. *Atlantic Monthly Press. 288 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by ELIOT A. COHEN

THIS reviewer must confess to having some initial doubts about a book whose dust jacket sports endorsements from both Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter. Yet such is the case with Zbigniew Brzezinski's *Game Plan*, an interesting if uneven discussion of American grand strategy for the long-term competition with the Soviet empire. It is an ambitious attempt to provide a comprehensive view of America's most important security problem since World War II—coping with the Soviet Union.

Brzezinski begins the book by laying out the historical context of the clash between the two empires (a word which he uses in a self-consciously neutral way), portraying it as a struggle for Eurasia, the World Island which contains most of mankind, its artificially created wealth, and the earth's natural resources. Following a quick tour of "Peripheral Zones of Special Vulnerability," *Game Plan* discusses the Soviet Union as a "One-Dimensional Rival," an enemy whose sole asset is his raw military power. In the remaining two-fifths of the book Brzezinski sketches out a menu of American goals and strategies.

Despite some minor lapses into a curious patois of Washington and academic jargon, Brzezinski writes vigorously and clearly. He does not refrain from expressing views unlikely to win him favor in the circles in which he has moved thus far, and particularly in the Democratic party. He thinks that strategic defenses make sense, and that they should be deployed sooner rather than later. He dismisses passionate believers in arms control, and disparages both the product and process of most contemporary arms control, referring to it in one form as "the contamination of strategy by pacifism." He suggests that the United States should pursue a policy of gently prying loose the East European states from Soviet domination. When speaking of our European allies he displays a rare bluntness, accusing them of "shirking their defense obligations." He has, moreover, no illusions about the possibilities of long-term accommodation with the Soviets, either through condominium or extensive arms control. Indeed, one of the book's greatest merits lies in its insistence on the simple fact that the United States *is* locked in a long-term competition with the Soviet Union, and that we must design our strategy accordingly.

IN Brzezinski's view, the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union takes place along three major fronts: in Western Europe, in the Far East, and in Southwest Asia. He warns that a fourth front could open up—greatly to our disadvantage—along our southern border if corruption and civil strife cause Central America (and ultimately Mexico) to fall into social chaos. On each of the three major fronts there exists a pair of linchpin states (Poland and Germany; South Korea and the Philippines; Iran and Pakistan) whose alignment can tip the balance throughout the region. In each case he gives a quick summary of the forces arrayed on either side; he is particularly good at suggesting how the contest in each region looks from the Soviet point of

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ELIOT A. COHEN, *who teaches in the department of strategy at the Naval War College, is the author of* Citizens & Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service. *His article, "Do We Still Need Europe?" appeared in our January issue.*

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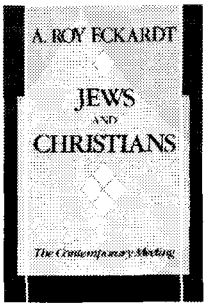

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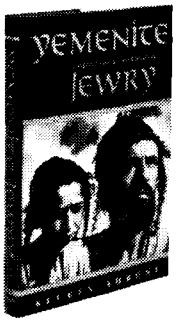

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view, including in the text a variety of maps drawn from the vantage point of Moscow—a sobering lesson in geopolitics.

Yet for all this book's shrewdness, it is not completely satisfactory. Part of the problem stems from Brzezinski's analysis of the mainsprings of Soviet conduct, which he finds almost wholly in the long traditions of czarist statecraft. "Soviet intentions derive from the historical Russian desire to achieve a preeminent global standing." Although the author of *Game Plan* acknowledges that ideology plays some role in shaping *how* the Soviets do what they do, he believes that it has very little to say about *why* they do what they do.

Now, one need not proceed to the limits of the opposing view (most articulately expressed by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn) to think that Communism provides more than some tactical prescriptions and obsolete economic recipes to the Soviet leadership. Not even the most megalomaniacal of the Czars dreamed of imposing not only his rule but the Russian system of social organization on the entire earth, nor did the old Russia ever pose the kind of threat to the world balance of power that the USSR does today. Moreover, insofar as Marxism-Leninism does (as Brzezinski freely concedes) shape the Soviet approach to all matters of foreign policy and war, it would have been worthwhile, in a book of this kind, to speculate about what kinds of vulnerabilities that ideology creates, and how we might exploit them.

Brzezinski's curious reluctance to ascribe fundamentally ideological motivations to Soviet leaders is all the more odd in view of his proposal that the United States should use its ideology as a weapon in this long-term struggle, particularly in Eastern Europe. The idea is in many ways an attractive one, but what should the United States do about situations (particularly in the Middle East) in which liberalism—secular, individualistic, and materialistic—excites only the most vicious kinds of loathing? Ideology is more than simply a weapon in the contests between states, to be exploited or discarded according to the dictates of expediency. Rather, it pervades this conflict and many others, and so needs to be considered as part of the environment, not simply as a weapon in the arsenal.

It is in part Brzezinski's undervaluing of ideology that leads him to a generally optimistic prognosis. "[T]he Soviet Union is like a giant with steel hands but rotten innards. It can crush in its grip weaker opponents but a spreading corrosion is eating away at its system." If the United States can only deploy its forces skillfully, patching a weakness here, capitalizing on a strength there, it is certain to win. If the U.S. does not lose the contest, Brzezinski argues, it will have won; if the USSR does not win, it will have lost.

There is much to be said for such optimism, but Brzezinski passes lightly over his view of the end game in this prolonged match. He does not expect a central nuclear war, and even a limited conventional conflict is, as he and others have pointed out, quite unlikely. He notes the many weaknesses of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe, as well as the many internal demographic, economic, and even ecological problems. He advocates a more aggressive policy than many of his colleagues in the academic world, at any rate, would feel comfortable with, and argues that such a form of genteel rollback would ensure American victory—not through a knockout, perhaps, but certainly on points.

But Brzezinski does not spell out how he expects the Soviet Union to react to these developments. He appears to think that it will grudgingly concede its loss of global power as long as its immediate security interests go unthreatened, which is more or less what one would expect of a sensible Great Power. Surely, however, a reversal of history of such magnitude, unaccountable from the point of view of Marxist theology, would create enormous and possibly unpredictable tensions in the Soviet leadership. Perhaps, in the end, the Soviets could accommodate such a catastrophic deviation from the course of events their beliefs lead them to expect: if so, one would like to know how. In any event, Brzezinski's coyness about how the game ends, if it ever does, leaves his reader dissatisfied, precisely because of the book's obviously large ambitions. To say, as he does in his conclusion, that winning is a process, not a result, is to evade the larger question, particularly when he mentions the possibility that a successful U.S.-Soviet competition could conceivably lead to a dissolution of the Great Russian empire.

Game Plan has other weaknesses, most notably a lack of rigor in military analysis. Although Brzezinski has not shunned military detail, he does not delve deeply enough into it to make convincing operational arguments. For example, he proposes the creation of more light divisions, plus the airlift to sustain them, in order to meet possible Soviet aggression in the Persian Gulf. How, precisely, these light divisions could stop heavy Soviet formations is unclear; the analogy which Brzezinski draws between British light forces fighting Argentine infantry in the Falklands and American forces opposing Soviet mechanized forces in the Persian Gulf is simply untenable. Moreover, Brzezinski never spells out the extent to which the resources freed up by withdrawing 100,000 troops from Europe would actually remedy the deficiencies of the Rapid Deployment Force.

Although Brzezinski does make casual reference to the use of the so-called emerging technologies (very accurate, very "smart" long-range rockets and missiles), he fails to provide the reader with a good enough sense of the military environment in which the superpowers will conduct their competition. Perhaps that would require more speculation than Brzezinski would feel comfortable with, but then this is, quite properly, a speculative rather than a scholarly book. The new military technologies—in particular, the development of weapons with sophisticated computer guidance, but also the evolution of radically new kinds of weapons such as electromagnetic rail guns, lasers, etc.—may completely change the strategic envir-

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onment in which the contest will take place. If not, then at least the author of *Game Plan* should explain why not.

NONE of the above, however, should be taken to suggest that *Game Plan* is anything but an instructive work. If nothing else, by tackling a project of this scope, and by having the courage to make unpopular observations and (for some at least) extremely disturbing proposals, Brzezinski has suggested how we should go about thinking through what is, after all, the enduring strategic problem of our time. Most important, perhaps, is the tough-minded common sense that he brings to bear on the strategic competition. His discussion of the Strategic Defense Initiative provides a good example of this. He properly rejects as extreme and self-contradictory the arguments of the most vociferous opponents of SDI, who hold that it will prove both easy to foil and tremendously destabilizing; at the same time, he argues that the notion of a perfect defense against nuclear weapons will prove chimerical. Instead, he suggests that the advent of anti-missile defenses will create more balanced force structures for both sides, which works to the advantage of the United States.

Above all, *Game Plan* reminds us of the importance of thinking strategically about the long-term competition with the Soviet Union. With one or two notable exceptions, this kind of thinking does not get done in government, and for several decades, at any rate, precious little of it has taken place outside it, at either universities or think-tanks. Unfortunate as this may have been in the past, it is perilous today, because the imperative of strategic thought arises from a steady slippage in America's relative strength *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union. Despite the best efforts of the Reagan administration, the United States has barely managed to undo the worst damage to the defense establishment caused by years of underfunding. Brzezinski's generally optimistic approach and conclusions, therefore, must be set against a background of eroding American power. This is not to suggest that the Soviet Union does not face its own, and indeed far more severe, difficulties. It is, however, to say that lackadaisical strategy-making is an indulgence we can no long afford.

Caste, Class & Quota

JOINING THE CLUB: A HISTORY OF JEWS AND YALE. By DAN A. OREN. *Yale University Press. 440 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by GIDEON G. ROSE

WHEN an outraged Yale trustee complained that too many Jews had been admitted to the Yale class of 1933, the chairman of admissions, Robert Corwin, agreed: "The list as published reads like some of the 'begat' portions of the Old Testament and might easily be mistaken for a recent roll call at the Wailing Wall." Corwin, in fact, was the man most responsible for the unacknowledged 10-percent quota for Jewish students in effect at Yale from 1923 through the early 1960's. But as Dan A. Oren's study establishes, the roots of that quota lay not in any individual's prejudices but in the most fundamental attitudes of the Protestant establishment, of which Yale was but an expression.

In 1701 the state of Connecticut granted a charter to a Collegiate School "wherein Youth may be instructed in the Arts and Sciences who through the blessing of Almighty God may be fitted for Publick employment both in Church and Civil State." During the next two centuries the Collegiate School, renamed Yale, became a secular university, but its Congregationalist origins lingered; mandatory daily chapel was not dropped until 1925. Along with Harvard and Princeton, Yale was at the top of the American educational system, and of the three it was socially preeminent. By the turn of the 20th century, Yale had become the main training ground for the nation's corporate elite.

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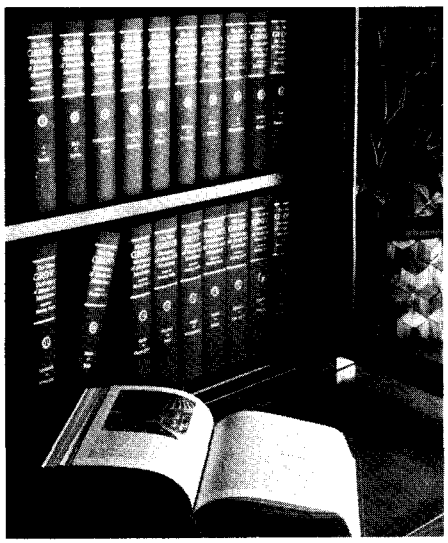

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as much a course in character as in academics. Owen Johnson's legendary Dink Stover, when asked what "his type" took from Yale to the nation, replied: "First, a pretty fine type of gentleman, with good, clear honest standards; second, a spirit of ambition and a determination not to be beaten; third, the belief in democracy." If reality sometimes fell short, there was at least a recognized ideal—though it should be noted that the ideal was characteristically expressed in moral and social rather than in intellectual terms.

At the turn of this century, as the children of robber barons caroused in New Haven, events abroad were driving millions to emigrate to the United States. Prominent among the newcomers were East European Jews, who arrived with little except a fierce desire to learn and rise. Many of their sons were drawn to Yale because of its reputation and resources. While there had been Jews at Yale since the days of Moses Simons (B.A. 1809), they had been few in number and easily incorporated by a generally tolerant community. By the 1920's, however, nearly 10 percent of Yale undergraduates were Jewish, and the Jewish applicant pool was expanding every year. Worse yet, to Yale administrators, most of these Jews were poor New Haven "townies," who concentrated on their studies and did not participate (whether voluntarily or involuntarily) in extracurricular activities.

Faced with what it considered a crisis, and prodded by men like Corwin, Yale enacted an unwritten quota to keep the level of Jews at or about the then-current 10 percent. Oren, while hardly excusing this action or pretending that a man like Corwin was anything but an anti-Semite, does show that the Yale administration, like its Ivy League counterparts, was facing a legitimately trying situation. Yale was an integral part of a larger establishment which, at the time, was simply not ready to admit large numbers of Jews on equal terms. Had Yale come to be seen as a "Jewish" college, rightly or wrongly, it might well have lost the patronage of the upper class to institutions like Harvard, which had not hesitated to introduce its own quota. Moreover, in view of Yale's avowedly social as well as academic purposes, the fact that a large portion of its student body conspicuously did not participate in social activities posed a troublesome issue.

That Yale had a legitimate problem, however, and that it had to act within certain social parameters, does not mean that it acted justifiably or well. As Oren points out, rather than simply limiting their numbers, Yale could have tried to integrate its Jewish students into the life of the campus. Besides, the fact that there may well have been a "tipping point" in the 1920's beyond which a Wasp exodus might have started in no way justifies Yale's retention of the quota into the 1960's—especially when other universities began to drop theirs in the 40's.

Still, while quotas remained in place at Yale for almost two decades after World War II, the reason may have had more to do with bureaucratic inertia than with prejudice. Certainly no one after the war openly showed anti-Jewish bias. President Griswold sincerely believed he had ended the quota by fiat in the early 1950's, but it survived in the attitudes of the admissions-committee staff for quite a while after. When Yale finally broke with its clublike past in the 1960's, the era of officially sanctioned anti-Semitism was gone for good.

THE sociologist E. Digby Baltzell describes in *The Protestant Establishment* the way America's elite has oscillated between behaving as an "aristocracy" into which the best national talent could be assimilated and behaving as a "caste" with rigid barriers to entry that hurt not only those excluded but itself and the country as a whole. *Joining the Club,* a case study in how the 19th-century aristocracy transformed itself into a caste, puts flesh on Baltzell's thesis. The book also shows how in the end a loosening of barriers, both downward and upward, allowed that same establishment to replenish its supply of talent and energy. In that sense, the story of the Jews and Yale is a cautionary tale—but with a happy ending.

Nevertheless, two dark currents beneath the surface of this history give warning of serious, impending problems. It is impossible to read the story of the Jews—a brilliant group, kept back but then finally allowed to flourish—and not be aware of other ethnic or racial groups which have not found the Ivy League so congenial a home. The meritocratic admissions system may exclude minorities that do not fare well in open competition. How much, if at all, should one intervene to ensure a "balanced" freshman class? Is benevolent intervention, designed to help, less wrong than malevolent intervention, designed to exclude? Oren wisely skirts this problem, which does not admit of any easy solution.

Finally, Oren grapples inconclusively with the social ideal which the old university tried to foster. Dink Stover's Yale, where character was supposedly formed in democratic competition according to "clear honest standards," was by no means a place to be despised. Today's universities, by contrast, tend to leave character formation to the individual, and to abandon the very idea of standards in favor of moral relativism. To what extent is some common bond necessary to create a sense of purpose and community, without which a university will become just a random association of individuals?

These problems are as much philosophical as practical; by telling the particular story of the Jews at Yale so comprehensively and so well, Dan Oren's book both brings us back to such central questions and advances their discussion.

Flight to Freedom

SOVIET DEFECTORS: THE KGB WANTED LIST. By VLADISLAV KRASNOV. *Hoover Institution. 264 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by JULIANA GERAN PILON

ONLY a slave society produces defections, a word still burdened by a pejorative root signi-

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fying a failure, or lack, but which has come to denote the opposite: proof that even at the risk of death, the human spirit refuses enslavement. That is no hyperbole; as Vladislav Krasnov shows in *Soviet Defectors*, the act of defection from the Soviet Union has in many cases constituted sufficient grounds for the KGB to seek a person's murder.

Krasnov, having defected to Sweden in 1962 as an employee of Radio Moscow, is himself on the "KGB Wanted List." He has since received a doctorate in Russian literature from the University of Washington and currently teaches at the Monterey Institute in California. In 1977 Krasnov came across the existence of a secret list of defectors. Every three to six years, it seems, the KGB prepares a volume of 2,000 to 6,000 personal entries, interspersed with bimonthly "update bulletins," all stamped "absolutely secret." A typical entry is about 150 to 200 words, and includes a physical description of the defector, names and places of residence of his relatives, circumstances and date of defection, description of subsequent activities abroad, and the sentence—usually death.

THE list Krasnov himself has compiled for this study is made up of 470 defectors from 1945 to 1969. While it excludes failed defections, would-be defectors who were returned to the Soviet Union by the West, those who returned voluntarily, or died, as well as those whose defection has gone undetected by the KGB, it nevertheless is broad enough to provide a useful basis for understanding the general phenomenon. Under Khrushchev, for example, the typical defector was likely to be a sailor in the merchant marine who jumped ship while on a port call in Canada, a factory technician who crossed the state border to Turkey, or a young soldier who escaped to West Berlin before the building of the Wall. By contrast, during Brezhnev's first years in power (October 1964 to April 1969), the typical defector was a scholar sent to the West or a distinguished Soviet intellectual.

After the beginning of the 1970's, when limited emigration was at last permitted from the USSR, Soviet defection actually seems to have increased. According to Krasnov, even Jews continued to defect, despite the relative liberalization of emigration laws applying to them. In 1973, for example, when about 30,000 Jews left the USSR legally, Leonid Goldgur, a sailor, jumped ship in Japan to go to Israel. Soviet Jews defected in later years, too, as if in defiance of the legal emigration procedures which not only involved a humiliating process of "selection" but also turned rejected applicants into pariahs of Soviet society. Among the best-known Jewish defectors are the chess champions Victor Korchnoy and Lev Alburt; the

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Star Children

By Clara Asscher-Pinkoff

Translated by Terese Edelstein and Inez Smidt
Foreword by Harry James Cargas

Clara Asscher-Pinkoff, a teacher in the Amsterdam ghetto, wrote a series of stories about the children with the Jewish star. In Amsterdam, Star City, there is Star House, the detention center in which they children and their elders are herded. Westerbork, the transit camp to which they are shipped, becomes Star Desert. At the end of the railway line is Star Hell, Bergen-Belsen. Though the stories and their narrator are the author's creation, the book explores a new kind of realism in Holocaust literature. Begun in 1943, the book was first published in Holland in 1946 and has since been translated into several languages.

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prize-winning pianists Mikhail Rud and Vladimir Ashkenazy as well as the violinist Naum Fruman; and Aleksandr Jourjin, a twenty-six-year-old nuclear-physics graduate of Moscow University who defected in August 1979 by walking across Finland to Sweden.

Krasnov devotes an entire section to "Defection as a Form of Dissidence," offering the examples of Yuri Vlasenko, whose attempt to defect through the U.S. embassy in Moscow in 1979 ended in his death, and Lithuanian dissident Vladas Sakalys, who defected across the Finnish border. Other would-be defectors, whose attempts failed, usually wound up in labor camps with other dissidents.

Some of the failed attempts can unfortunately be attributed to U.S. policy—as in the case of Simas Kudirka, the Lithuanian radio operator whom U.S. officials returned to his ship in 1970, and, more recently, the case of the Ukrainian sailor Miroslav Medvid who jumped ship in New Orleans last October. Needless to say, this policy enrages Krasnov, who appeals to the American government to recognize that defection is first and foremost an issue of human rights.

BUT things are not always so simple. Absent from Krasnov's book is a discussion of the serious vulnerabilities of some defectors. Oleg Tumanov, a Radio Liberty editor who returned to Moscow in April 1986 after two decades in the West, is a case in point. Tumanov, whose name appears on Krasnov's list, had gotten to stay in the West (according to U.S. intelligence) as a result of a drinking brawl. Subsequent marital and other personal problems eventually prompted his return to the USSR where, in a recent interview with the Soviet foreign-affairs magazine *New Times*, he has already revealed information damaging to Radio Liberty and the West.

This is hardly to suggest that defectors should be shunned, but rather that they require very special attention. Krasnov is correct to urge the U.S. to take the plight of defectors seriously, and to view it "in the context of the global competition between the U.S. and the USSR for the hearts and minds of people around the world." But his unqualified endorsement of all defectors as "fellow human beings who . . . have managed to retain their essential humanity" begs the question of who is a genuine defector and who is not, who may even be a double agent, or a person susceptible to blackmail and other such influences.

Krasnov recommends that the U.S. "proclaim and implement a genuine open-door policy by issuing an official promise to the effect that any person defecting from the USSR would be exempt from regular immigration procedures." He might have mentioned in this connection that the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act was modified in March 1980 by eliminating the "preference" language stating that refugee status could be given to persons with a well-founded "fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion [if] they have fled from any Communist or Communist-dominated country or area." This section, quite simply, needs to be restored.

Inside a Christian School

GOD'S CHOICE: THE TOTAL WORLD OF A FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL. By ALAN PESHKIN. *University of Chicago Press. 349 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by TERRY TEACHOUT

SOME good ideas never catch on. The American people, for example, have consistently failed to show serious interest in an educational voucher system. The reason for this is obvious. Despite the seemingly general sense of dissatisfaction with our public schools, relatively few parents in America now opt for such private alternatives as currently exist.

The numbers tell the story. Of the roughly 48 million schoolchildren in America, only 5.3 million attend private schools of any kind, religious or otherwise. As of 1981, nearly 3 million of these children were attending Catholic schools, while another 450,000 were enrolled in "Christian schools," those primary and secondary schools which are run by fundamentalist churches. Though enrollment in private school continues to increase, we are still a long way from anything remotely approaching the market-driven privatization of American schooling.

WHY, then, have Christian schools had such a profound effect in recent years on the public consciousness? One suspects the answer has something to do with the censorious attitude implied by their methods. Though not all Americans send their children to religious schools out of conviction, the majority of parents who send their children to a Christian school do so solely because they want them to study in a social environment consistent with their religious beliefs. The hostility with which liberal groups like People for the American Way or the National Education Association (NEA) view such schools becomes a good deal clearer when seen in this light. For anyone who accepts the pluralistic assumptions on which American public schooling is based, the mere existence of Christian schools, like the existence of Amish or Mennonite communities, is the moral equivalent of a slap in the face.

Not surprisingly, the American public knows as little about Christian schools as it does about fundamentalism in general. But the political events of the last few years should by now have convinced even the most stubborn pluralist of the need to come to grips with fundamentalism. Since Christian schools are (in Erving Goffman's phrase) "total institutions" where the operational consequences of fundamentalist doctrine are dramatized with singular clarity, they are perhaps as good a place as any to start, and anyone looking to find out exactly what goes on inside a Christian school would do well to read Alan Peshkin's *God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School.*

TERRY TEACHOUT *is an associate editor of* Harper's *and an editor of the conservative newsletter* Modern Times.

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Peshkin, a professor of education at the University of Illinois, spent eighteen months observing "Bethany Baptist Academy," a Christian school located in "Hartney," an Illinois town of 50,000, in preparation for the writing of *God's Choice*. (Peshkin uses disguised names throughout.) His task was a difficult one. To describe the insular world portrayed in *God's Choice* requires a degree of sympathy and detachment that is given to few observers, professional or otherwise. "Never before," Peshkin says at one point,

> had I known true believers, possessors of Truth, who are convinced beyond my imagination of the certainty of God, heaven, hell, Jesus Christ, and salvation, and of the unqualified authenticity of the Bible as God's word.

The fact that Peshkin is a Jew undoubtedly complicated matters still further. ("No matter how good a person you are," one uncooperative pastor told him, "you will misrepresent my school because you don't have the Holy Spirit in you.") Indeed, three Christian schools turned down his initial approaches before he finally met with success at Bethany.

Needless to say, Peshkin was not converted to fundamentalism by his experience at Bethany Baptist Academy. His conclusions are as skeptical as his observations are sympathetic. But *God's Choice* is nonetheless an unusually objective attempt to convey the flavor of life in a Christian school, and it has the equally admirable virtue of being written in plain English rather than some obscure sociological argot. A poor index notwithstanding, Peshkin's efforts have been successful in every way. *God's Choice* is by far the single most satisfactory discussion of the Christian school movement to date, scholarly or otherwise.

Given the course of current political events, *God's Choice* also takes on a further degree of interest beyond the merely scholarly. Much has been heard recently to the effect that the Reagan coalition will not hold together in 1988 unless some kind of rapprochement is achieved between mainstream conservatives and the religious Right. Though Peshkin obviously had other agendas in mind when he wrote *God's Choice*, his book has much of value to tell us in this important connection. He notes that

> the legality of [Bethany Baptist Academy] is not in question, nor, indeed, is the wisdom of the judgment that established the legality. There remains, however, the question of what kind of alternative the fundamentalist Christian school offers and the highly pertinent question of what consequences the Christian schools hold for American education and American society.

Bethany Baptist Academy is in a very real sense "what the fundamentalists want." Peshkin's book is particularly valuable for the forthright way in which it asks the key question: should we want it for them as well?

THE leadership of Bethany Baptist Church began considering the possibility of building a church-run private school as early as 1968. "William Muller," the church's pastor, told Peshkin that

> when the Vietnam war was on, I saw the American flag being insulted. I saw colleges opening up their dormitories to coed living. I saw the products of the schools of education, who were going to be the teachers in the public schools. . . . [T]here was some evolution being given to my daughter. I went over [to the public school] at parent-visitation time and I saw the stuff around the walls. When I saw these things, I said that this is the time.

Pastor Muller's dismay at the worldliness he observed in the public schools of Hartney ultimately led to the founding of Bethany Baptist Academy, which opened in 1972 and soon grew to its present enrollment of 350 boys and girls in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Bethany Baptist Academy is a member of the American Association of Christian Schools (AACS), a nationwide organization which seeks to "rescue our Christian youth from the brainwashing socialistic, amoral, and often atheistic public-school system." The AACS requires member schools to "subscribe without reservation" to a three-paragraph statement of faith which contains the basic tenets of the fundamentalist creed: biblical inerrancy, creationism, separation from the world, substitutional atonement for original sin, salvation by grace, rebirth in the Holy Spirit. Membership in the AACS is not open to "those associated with, members of, or in accord with the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the Modern Charismatic Movement, or the Ecumenical Movement."

Each school day at Bethany Baptist Academy begins with a meeting of all teachers. "Tom McGraw," the headmaster, reads and discusses a Bible verse, and this is followed by announcements, prayer requests, and the regular morning prayer. Though the teaching of Christian doctrine is unsystematically "integrated" into most classes, the curriculum is fairly standard for a school of Bethany's size: four years each of English and physical education, three years of social studies, two years each of math and science, one year of speech. Junior-high and high-school students attend chapel three times a week. High-school students are required to take a four-year Bible course. A course in "soul-winning" is optional. Interracial dating is not permitted, and women are not allowed to hold student leadership positions.

These latter facets of the program would no doubt attract the unfavorable attention of the federal judiciary were it not for the fact that Bethany Baptist Academy, like most Christian schools, receives no government funds. ("To Christian educators," Peshkin correctly notes, "government money denotes government control.") The high school charged an annual tuition of $900 in 1981. Additional contributions from Bethany Baptist Church and other private donors, plus revenue derived from candy sales, keep the school more or less in the black.

IN certain ways, Bethany Baptist Academy may resemble a typical

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small-town public school, but the similarities are for the most part superficial ones. It is the differences that are crucial, and they begin with the way in which Bethany defines its function as a school:

> Students are exhorted to know and obey what God enjoins them to do. In this way, the Holy Spirit will encompass them and enable them to live a spiritual life, a life whose actions communicate a resolve to reject the world, Satan's enticing domain in which secular humanism extols man rather than God as the measure of all things. Christians must be and must remain *separate from the world—in it but not of it*. . . . Separateness in dress, language, belief, and general conduct should be strikingly clear.

These rigorous assumptions permeate the daily life of Bethany Baptist Academy, a place where students are expected to bring their Bibles to every class except gym; where gifted students are firmly encouraged to shun the godless colleges of the Ivy League in favor of fundamentalist institutions like Bob Jones University or Maranatha Bible College; where the school librarian carefully censors each book entrusted to her watchful care ("I found a double page of monkeys developing into man and, of course, we don't approve of that at all, so I just sealed the pages together and it didn't bother the reading on either side").

Bethany enforces a rigid dress code and an even more rigid code of behavior. Moreover, it expects students to live up to these codes at all times, in or out of school. Students are not permitted to go to movies or dances, and Headmaster McGraw occasionally shows up without warning at private student parties in order to check for unacceptable conduct. When watching television at home, Bethany students are expected to "turn from those programs which have vulgar jokes, immorality, and activity prohibited by the school." They must "refuse to listen to music that creates a reckless spirit or words that suggest immorality or a turning against authority." (This means rock-and-roll.) And they are not permitted to use "obscene language," a catchall which includes such "minced oaths" as "gee whiz" and "gosh" as well as the more widely recognized vulgarisms. Students are strongly encouraged to turn in peers who break the rules, and it is almost always socially acceptable for them to do so.

THE seriousness with which Bethany Baptist Academy views its myriad rules of conduct cannot be overstated. They are, after all, *moral* imperatives, and they are unhesitatingly enforced with corporal punishment and the threat of expulsion. "Our job," Headmaster McGraw says confidently, "is teaching the truth." What this *means in terms of actual classroom* practice, according to Peshkin, is that

> when teachers have pronounced what is true, students may not question the teachers' authority to do so. For the essence of the proper student response to authority is submission, total and unqualified, as long as the person in authority is not violating scriptural doctrine. . . . [A]ll teaching efforts must be directed to shape students' minds to Christ.

"We *are* extreme in our belief," Pastor Muller says. "In essence we negate all the other religions of the world. OK. They're wrong. There is no way of getting into heaven except through Jesus Christ." On this point the faculty of Bethany Baptist Academy is in unanimous agreement. All twelve of the teachers in the high-school division are "born again" Christians, this being a condition of employment. Eight of them attended fundamentalist colleges. Their favorite magazines are *U.S. News and World Report* and *Reader's Digest*, their favorite television show *Little House on the Prairie*. Their politics are conservative and they do not hesitate to voice them in the classroom. ("When it gets down to it," one social-studies teacher told his class on the eve of the 1980 elections, "Carter's anti-American.") And they have all made considerable financial sacrifices in order to teach at Bethany Baptist, where the base salary in 1980 was $5,900.

Pastor Muller and Headmaster McGraw see Bethany Baptist Academy and its sister schools as the last redoubts of Christian morality in a country shot through with the dry rot of "secular humanism." They expect ultimately to become victims of frank religious persecution, and their interest in politics, as Pastor Muller readily explains, is a direct outgrowth of this expectation:

> [W]e're draining off a few dollars of support from public schools. As long as it isn't too much, there won't be too many rules against us, but as soon as it begins to affect pocketbooks, you can rest assured that there will be suppression. There will be laws and there will be regulations. I guess the point is that if we're to have enough power and clout to withstand, then we must get more involved in political issues. We're not asking for anything other than our freedom.

The realities of life at Bethany Baptist Academy, of course, are a good deal more supple than one necessarily gathers from this bald account. In his eighteen months there, Peshkin copied down graffiti from the bathroom walls, plucked mash notes out of classroom wastebaskets, overheard students eagerly discussing last week's *Saturday Night Live* and gossiping about the love lives and musical tastes of their peers. (Only 28 percent of the students, he found, claim "never" to listen to rock-and-roll.) "Within the framework of the special school Christian educators have established," he concludes, "there is an ordinary school, as ordinary as acne and McDonald's yellow arches."

But while the students of Bethany Baptist Academy are not the mindless, glassy-eyed religious robots of hostile caricature, they are also markedly different from their counterparts in the Hartney public-school system. Even those "rebels" who make fun of overly pious peers do so within the context of a powerfully spiritual environment, one which shapes their attitudes to a startling degree:

> Is interracial marriage OK? Yes, say 61 percent of [Hartney] pub-

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lic-school students; yes, say only 30 percent of Bethany students. Should books written by Communists be available in public libraries? Yes, say 73 percent of public-school students; yes, say only 29 percent of Bethany's. Is it good that America has so many different religious groups? Yes, say 73 percent of public-school students; yes, say only 27 percent of Bethany's. And, finally, should homosexuals have the same rights as heterosexuals? Yes, say 58 percent of public-school students; yes, say only 26 percent of Bethany's.

Peshkin's conclusion is that "the academy—abetted by its parental and church allies—communicates its beliefs and values to a considerable extent. . . . [At Bethany] one's behavior becomes molded—not necessarily programmed, but at least predictably disposed." After reading *God's Choice*, it is hard not to agree.

ONE of the most interesting things about *God's Choice* is the clarity with which it conveys the author's ambivalence toward Bethany Baptist Academy. Peshkin acknowledges that its students are for the most part "loyal, honest, hard-working, punctual, and reliable." He lauds the dedication and commitment of its staff. He is remarkably candid about the positive feelings evoked by his stay at Bethany, comparing it at one point to life in a kibbutz. ("When I left Bethany each Friday night to go to my own community, I felt I had left order for disorder, harmony for dissonance, and absolutism for relativism.") And he recognizes that the Christian school movement is an altogether logical response to the vertiginous decline of our public schools as agents for the transmission of traditional values.

But Peshkin nonetheless finds certain aspects of the Christian school movement disturbing, and his thoughtfully expressed concerns revolve around the problem of fitting Christian schools into the larger framework of a pluralistic society. To be sure, Bethany Baptist Academy preaches Christian tolerance. (The "love the sinner, hate the sin" formulation common among fundamentalists turns up with some regularity in *God's Choice*.) And it is the *beneficiary* of tolerance as well; schools like Bethany exist because American society permits, if it does not actively encourage, diversity. There is, however, a distinct difference between theoretical and practical tolerance, a difference which Pastor Muller suggested in a conversation with Peshkin:

> I can think of Christians taking over political life and pockets of power in certain communities. . . . If on the city council of my town the majority were members of Bethany Baptist Church and committed Christians, well, what would we do about liquor and liquor ordinances? I'd vote against them all the way. . . . I guess I wonder if I'd be very tolerant of a non-Christian position. I would hope to believe that I'd be very understanding, but when my Christianity affects my whole life, it has to affect my politics.

The fact is that schools like Bethany Baptist Academy, whatever their officially expressed positions, are not seriously committed to the maintenance of pluralism. How could they be? Fundamentalism is as intransigent and absolute a religious doctrine as exists in American life today. Its adherents believe that theirs is *the* truth. Consistency requires them to proselytize and, ultimately, to impose their beliefs on the fabric of our society if they possibly can. "The more vigorously groups like Bethany's Christians thrive," Peshkin observes, "the more we know that American pluralism is healthy. Yet the more successfully such groups proselytize, the more pluralism may be endangered."

THERE is no trace of paranoia in Peshkin's concern over the absolutism of the Christian school movement. His conclusions, all things considered, are almost miraculously evenhanded:

> The *potential* for abuse . . . does not establish the state's compelling interest to abolish either the political or the educational arms of absolutist Christian groups. . . . [T]heir institutions must not be slandered, their leaders must not

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be vilified, their students and teachers must not be taken to task for what they *may* do. Their right to thrive is inviolable, at least until they overstep the line between safe and unsafe. . . . Not soon, or ever, I trust, will we deem that the time has unmistakably come to fight fundamentalist Christian schools.

For Peshkin, the problem is not yet (and may never be) serious enough to warrant action. For others, however, and perhaps in particular for mainstream American conservatives, it must be confronted at once. Conservatives, after all, will almost certainly have to contrive *some* kind of meaningful alliance with the religious Right if they are to continue on the road to majority status in American politics. A sufficient number of common goals exists to make such an alliance appear natural. But no one who reads *God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School* can make the careless mistake of assuming that mainstream conservatives and fundamentalists are anything but two very different groups indeed.

Talking to South Africans

DISPENSATIONS: THE FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA AS SOUTH AFRICANS SEE IT. By RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS. *Eerdmans. 317 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by
SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON

THE subtitle of Richard John Neuhaus's important and fascinating book is "The Future of South Africa as South Africans See It." Happily the book does not live up to the subtitle. Discussions of the future of South Africa almost invariably involve two elements: first, scenarios of possible future developments, with the most probable often being the least desirable; and, second, prescriptions of what should be done to realize a more desirable outcome. Neuhaus provides neither of these elements. Instead he furnishes something much more unusual for the general reader interested in this crucial part of the world. The bulk of his book is devoted to explaining how individuals from the principal groups in South Africa view themselves, their compatriots, and their country. The sources are, in most cases, interviews which Neuhaus had with group leaders and some rank and file. Some of these interviews are reported quite extensively, others more briefly, and an effort is made to relate interview materials to particular themes, so that one may run into what Bishop Tutu, for instance, told Neuhaus at several places in the book. In a rough count I estimated reports of interviews with about fifteen Afrikaners, four English-speaking whites, ten blacks, four Coloureds, and two Indians. All in all, Neuhaus presents a highly nuanced picture of the diversity, complexity, and ambivalence that exist in South African society.

Two limitations of his interview reports should, however, be noted. First, with one minor exception, the interviews with whites are with private persons, primarily religious leaders and academics, while the black interviews are entirely with leaders of the black community. Thus, on one side, the views of the Botha government and the National party leadership are missing and, on the other, so also are the views of rank-and-file blacks as well as local leaders who lack the stature of Motlana, Tutu, Tambo, Buthelezi, or Makatina.

A second limitation is the absence of an analysis of the extent to which the views of South Africans are changing. Neuhaus did most of his interviewing in 1983, as the new constitution was being debated, but he also includes material from other visits to South Africa, ranging from his first in 1971 to his most recent in August 1985. Rarely, however, does he indicate the dates of the specific interviews recorded in the text, and the implicit assumption appears to be that over the past fifteen years the views of South Africans have remained fairly constant. This, of course, is very far from the case, and it is unfortunate that Neuhaus did not elaborate to a greater extent the changes over time in the views of the individuals he interviewed and did not put these in the context of broader changes in public opinion. He makes no use at all, for instance, of the vast amount of South African survey data relevant to the questions with which he is concerned.

WITHIN these limitations, Neuhaus has provided a rich, insightful, and penetrating description and analysis of South African attitudes. He is particularly good, in his opening chapters, in giving an illuminating picture of the psychology of the Afrikaner and the nature of traditional Afrikaner outlook manifested in the mythology of the Great Trek and Blood River and the corporatism of the Dutch Reformed Church, Broederbund, and National Party. All these are powerful forces for unity and cohesion. At the same time, however, the Afrikaner can often be ambivalent or schizophrenic. In particular, he has no easy answer to the question of whether he is primarily an African or a Westerner. On the one hand, he identifies with the West and tries to portray himself as a front-line fighter in the defense of the West against Soviet Communism. On the other, he also claims to be an African, the first tribe to settle in southern Africa, and Mr. Neuhaus quotes statements by both blacks and Afrikaners as to how they have much in common as Africans.

Neuhaus is a Lutheran minister who was active in the civil-rights movement in the 1960's and who is currently head of the Center on Religion and Society in New York. His religious background and concerns are manifest in this book. Clergymen and professors of theology are prominent among his interviewees. He makes a compelling argument, however, that religion is central to understanding the political outlook of both Afrikaners and blacks. Key elements in both groups believe that God is on their side. "It really is an amazing thing," as one Marxist Afrikaner theology professor(!) observed. "Black and white are both turning to God as

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they turn against one another. It will be a civil war between Christians when it comes. Whether this means it will be less bloody or more bloody, I really don't know, and I really don't want to wait around to see." In Lebanon and Ireland people of the same race now kill each other because they differ in religion. In South Africa in the future, this analysis suggests, people of different races could be more likely to kill each other because they have the same religion.

ELEVEN out of twelve chapters in Neuhaus's book are devoted to the presentation and discussion of the views of South Africans. The last chapter, however, is primarily concerned with a paper I wrote in 1981 at the invitation of the South African Political Science Association. This paper attempts to lay out the ways in which a South African government, if it were committed to reform, might attempt to carry out reform in this deeply divided society. At that time Prime Minister Botha had proclaimed the need to move away from apartheid, and his government had taken some modest steps in that direction. A commission was at work preparing a new constitution. Purportedly a struggle was under way within the National party between the "enlightened ones" or *verligte*, who were committed to change, and the standpatters, or *verkrampte*, who were strongly opposed. Drawing upon what seemed to be the most relevant experiences in other countries, I outlined a strategy the government might follow in attempting to move to a post-apartheid political and social system. The paper attracted considerable attention in South Africa, and has occasioned recurring discussion as to whether the strategy it outlined has indeed been the strategy of the Botha government. Neuhaus quotes Dennis Worrall, chairman of the constitution reform committee, to that effect: "You've read Huntington. That's it. That's the Scripture. Not necessarily in the specific details, but that's the spirit and the substance of what this government is trying to do. That's it."

For a social scientist, such testimonials may be titillating but they are not necessarily flattering or true, and I would like to enter two important qualifications. First, my paper was written before I ever visited South Africa and without consultation with any government or National party official. Nor have I had any such consultation since its publication five years ago. Hence the paper clearly was not written to express the strategy which government officials may have had in mind. If it did so, that was a matter of coincidence.

Second, during the past five years, the government has deviated sharply from the reform strategy outlined in my paper. The paper emphasized the need for a reform government to keep the initiative, to preempt potential demands, to broaden its base of support, and to avoid rhetoric which could only arouse expectations. Since 1981 the South African government has not followed these injunctions. As a result, it has gotten little credit for the reforms it has made and it now faces sustained violence in the black townships which it seems incapable of controlling. During the past two years it has failed to distinguish between those moderate black leaders who insist on the end of apartheid but have, to date, remained committed to nonviolence and the new, radical, younger generation of blacks who do not eschew and, indeed, often appear to prefer violence. By treating peaceful demonstrations, marches, funerals, and church services as if they posed implacable threats to public order and existing authority, the government has antagonized and weakened the moderate blacks (well-represented in Neuhaus's book) whom it should be attempting to strengthen and win to its side. Its actions are, in effect, producing polarization which is the prelude to revolution rather than accommodation which is essential to reform.

As a result, the possibility, which might have existed in 1981, of the government leading a reform process where it controlled the direction and tempo of change has probably disappeared. If apartheid is to be ended through peaceful means, reform will have to come through negotiation rather than imposition.

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Is it conceivable that through some means the leaders of the key groups in South Africa could come together and work out a post-apartheid political, economic, and social settlement in which the vital interests and rights of all groups would be protected? In less demanding circumstances, this has happened in other countries. In the late 1950's, the leaders of the key political and economic groups in Venezuela collaborated to overthrow the Pérez Jiménez dictatorship and then negotiated a series of "pacts" defining a constitutional and social framework that has made Venezuela the most stable and participatory democracy in South America for the last quarter century. (Given the fact that previously Venezuela had had the most unstable and dictatorial politics of any South American country, that was no mean achievement.) Also in the late 1950's, the leaders of the Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities in Malaysia agreed on a framework for sharing power that has given that country a high degree of political stability. Could something like this happen in South Africa?

On the basis of the South African attitudes reported by Neuhaus, one cannot be optimistic. *Dispensations* might well have been titled *Suspicions*. One cannot come away from reading it without a depressing sense of the extent to which distrust and antagonisms exist among groups and individuals. It is clearly not simply a question of white versus black. Afrikaners have contempt for English-speaking whites. The Indians of Natal are deeply fearful of the blacks at whose hands they have suffered racial violence. Zulus and Xhosas gird themselves for the struggle for power in post-apartheid South Africa. "Vigilantes" and "comrades" now fight it out in the black townships. Leaders of the various groups seldom seem to like or to trust each other. Buthelezi appears to have little use for Tambo, Motlana little for Buthelezi; other black leaders are suspicious of and perhaps envious of Tutu for the support and reputation he has in Europe and America. The Coloureds are split between those like Allan Boesak, who identify themselves with the blacks and attack the system head-on, and those like Allan Hendrickse, who attempt to change the system by participating within it. Most important, perhaps, is the distinction pointed to by Neuhaus between those black leaders, such as Buthelezi or Luci Mbuvelo, a major labor leader, who have organized constituencies and those who do not but are attempting to create constituencies.

Neuhaus closes his book with the vivid image of a meeting of South African leaders from all groups in which they come together to "articulate a new and inclusive covenant." "Please God," he writes, that the time for such a gathering "may still be coming." One can only add "amen," for on the evidence of this sobering book such an outcome is more likely to be the work of God than of man.

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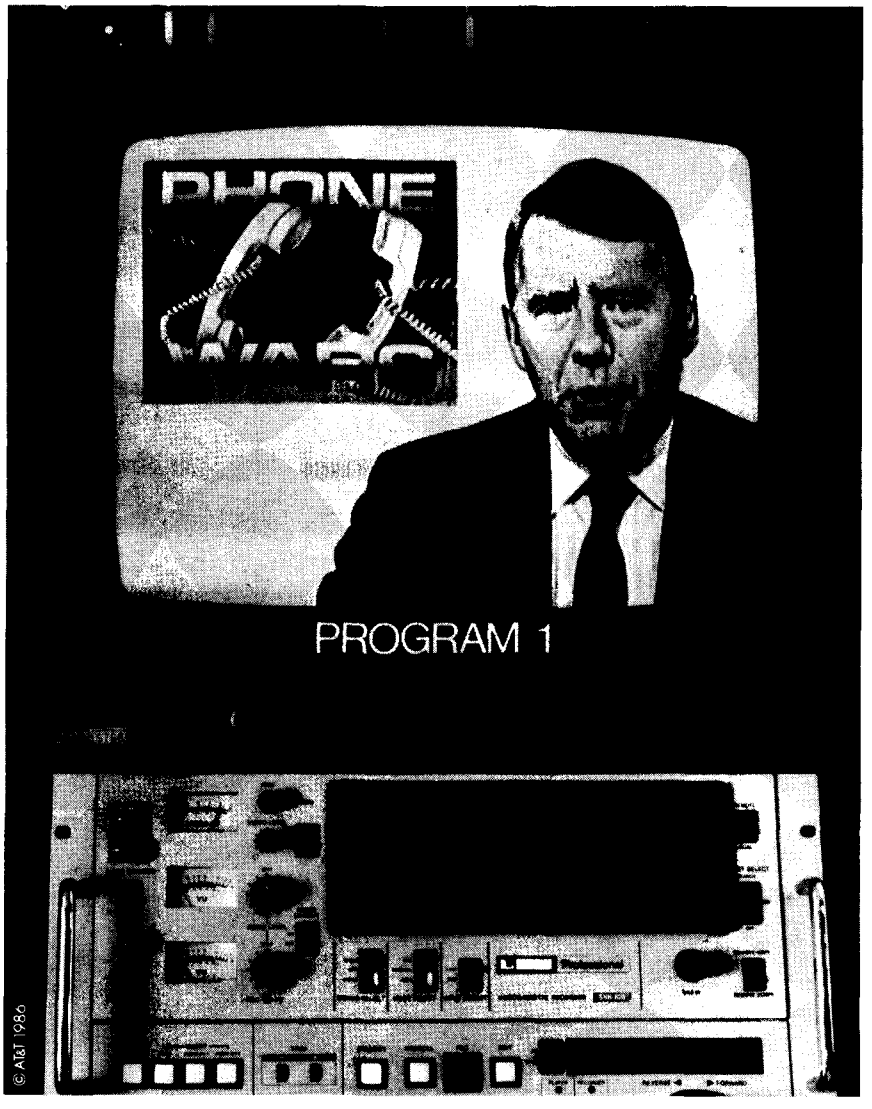

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